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ABSTRACT

This report describes Scottish research on ways in which headteachers in small primary schools managed mandated changes. The research focused on implementation of four recent major initiatives: 5-14 Curriculum Guidelines, School Development Planning, Staff Development and Appraisal, and Devolved School Management. Research methods included a national survey of all 863 small (fewer than 121 students) primary schools (708 responses) and 18 case studies. Chapters in the report cover: (1) research outline, aims, and methods; (2) the literature on Scottish small schools, headteachers' leadership style and career progression, and management support and development in small schools; (3) characteristics of Scottish small schools (enrollments, numbers of teachers, location, adequacy of facilities); (4) characteristics of headteachers (gender, age, qualifications, career histories, rural roots, management experience and training, future career plans); (5) implementation of the four major initiatives (extent of implementation, climate of change, headteachers' attitudes toward change, management activities overall and for each initiative, profile of "advanced" implementers); (6) elements of a small-school management style; (7) professional development and support for small schools and community support; and (8) recommendations for headteachers, Educational Authorities, and national bodies to support further development of managerial skills among headteachers in small schools. Contains 42 references. Appendixes include summary of legislation and guidelines affecting Scottish headteachers' management role (1980-96); summary of issues from previous research; methodology outline; and questionnaires and response summaries. (SV)

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Managing Change in Small Scottish Primary Schools

*Valerie Wilson
Joanna McPake*

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Managing Change in Small Scottish Primary Schools

Valerie Wilson
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We hope that we have fairly represented the views of all who participated in the research. Any errors are, of course, the responsibility of the authors.

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Executive summary

The research

This report describes research undertaken between 1996–8 by The Scottish Council for Research in Education into the Management of Change in small Scottish primary schools. It focuses on the implementation of four major initiatives: 5-14 Curricular Guidelines, School Development Planning (SDP), Devolved School Management (DSM) and Staff Development and Appraisal (SDA).

Aims

The aims were to identify the management strategies and activities developed by headteachers of schools with fewer than 121 pupils, and also available support and development opportunities.

Methods

A number of research methods was used including preliminary visits to six schools, a national survey of all 863 small primary schools, interviews with 18 case study headteachers and validation questionnaires to a further sample of 60 headteachers.

Main Findings

- 38% of primary schools in Scotland are small (Section 2.1)
- 89% of small schools are in rural or island areas (Section 3.3)
- headteachers in small schools have distinctive career patterns and aspirations (Section 4.2 & 4.3)
- only 18% of small school headteachers have held previous management posts but 79% have received some form of management training (Section 4.2)
- 44% of small school headteachers wish to remain in their current post indefinitely, but approximately a quarter (24%) are considering promotion (Section 4.3)
- virtually all small schools have either fully or partially implemented 5-14 and SDP, but DSM and SDA are further behind (Section 5.1)
- there is considerable variation in the implementation patterns of each initiative across the 11 authorities with the highest proportion of small schools (Section 5.1)
- there is little evidence to suggest that headteachers of small schools are resistant to change, but over half feel that the pace had been too swift (Section 5.3)
- small school headteachers use a range of management activities but overall informal consultation with other headteachers is the most popular (Section 5.4)
- being a *teaching headteacher* imposes particular stresses on small school headteachers, but also has advantages in terms of personal experience of curriculum innovation (Sections 4.3 and 6.1)
- headteachers in small schools have developed a unique style of management – *situational management* – based upon a realistic appraisal of their situation and resources (Section 6.4)
- their diverse backgrounds may help headteachers manage effectively the wide range of tasks which they must undertake (Section 6.4)
- headteachers draw on a wide range of support from Education Authorities, national documentation and training, and from their communities. Many believed that training and resources should be tailored to meet their special needs (Sections 7.2 – 7.5)

Main recommendations

The main recommendations include that:

- a representative from small schools should be involved in the planning of major educational initiatives
- all initiatives should include extended implementation timescales for small schools
- training should be tailored to meet the particular needs of small school headteachers, including 'rust prevention' and 'timeout' for those who wish to remain in post, and career advancement training for those who are seeking promotion
- case study exemplars for in-service training should be based upon the 2/3-teacher school (the most numerous group of small schools), but special attention should be paid to 1-teacher schools (10% of the total)
- school 'clusters' should be encouraged and resourced to facilitate co-operative planning and sharing of resources
- all newly appointed small school headteachers should be provided with timeous induction training
- adequate clerical support should be made available especially for the implementation of DSM
- consideration should be given to establishing a national small schools' network (drawing primarily from the 11 Education Authorities with the highest percent of small schools) and/or a small schools virtual teachers' centre to encourage developments, overcome any feelings of isolation and gain economies of scale from available resources.

The complete report follows.

1: Introduction

Nobody, I think has ever said look there are certain characteristics [in small schools] which we have to look closely at: we have to recognise that if a system isn't changing then there is something wrong with the system, but you also have to recognise that change brings stress and there really hasn't been that approach.

Assistant Director of Education

Rural people feel that the quality of schooling in their areas is superior to that found in large towns and cities...Small schools form a substantial proportion of all Scottish schools, especially in the primary sector in rural areas. At times of rapid change in both curriculum and school management these schools may face particular problems in coping with the pressure of innovation...

The Scottish Office (1995) Cm. 3041, p. 14

1.1 Introduction and research outline

In January 1996, the Scottish Council for Research in Education began a study of the management of change, including Devolved School Management, in small primary schools throughout Scotland. The study was commissioned by The Scottish Office Education and Industry Department, Research and Intelligence Unit.

The first phase of the research was based upon the results of a postal survey of headteachers in every Scottish small primary school. In this project, a small school is defined as one with a roll of 120 pupils or less. Therefore, the main focus of the research is the *teaching headteacher* – a role which is found predominantly within small schools.

The design of the questionnaire was informed by preliminary sensitising interviews with a variety of key informants including Education Authority officials, headteachers of small schools, class teachers and School Board members. In addition, published literature pertaining to the management of small schools was reviewed. Unlike much previously published research, to which we shall return in Chapter 2 and Appendix B, the present study explores headteachers' management strategies and activities, *per se*, rather than the wider issues of learning and teaching within small schools.

The second phase of the study, conducted from January to April 1997, consisted of an examination of the effective management of change in 18 case study small schools. This was designed primarily to illuminate issues emerging from the national survey.

The findings from both stages have been incorporated into this final report. It comprises eight chapters, of which this is the first. Chapter 2 describes the context of the research and reviews existing literature on managing small schools. Chapter 3 provides a picture of small schools across Scotland, derived from the research. Chapter 4

explores the career histories of headteachers in small schools, looking at their qualifications and previous experiences, their routes to headship and their career aspirations. In Chapter 5, headteachers' approaches to implementing the four major educational initiatives of recent years are described, while Chapter 6 looks at factors influencing the management of change in small schools. Chapter 7 focuses on the training and support available to headteachers of small schools from Education Authorities, national bodies, and the schools' own communities. Finally, Chapter 8 draws conclusions from the study and suggests a way forward to support the continuing development of management skills for headteachers in small schools. Additionally, more details from both previous research and this study are provided in the appendices.

1.2 Aims of the research

The aims of the research should be placed within the context of rapid, multiple educational innovation, both curricular and management, during the past eight years. In Scotland, this includes 5-14 Curriculum Guidelines, School Development Planning, Staff Development and Appraisal and Devolved School Management (see Appendix A). Headteachers in all Scottish schools have had to manage these initiatives: our particular concern in this study is to identify the strategies adopted by headteachers in small schools. Specifically the research aimed to:

- identify management strategies and activities adopted by headteachers in small schools to manage change
- assess available support and development opportunities and also
- use the information gathered as a basis for making recommendations for the continuing development of managerial strategies and skills by small school headteachers.

1.3 Research Methods

As we saw in the previous section, the main aims of this study are to explore headteachers' management strategies and activities in small schools. This is an area where there is a paucity of published research findings. Therefore, our methodology was primarily informed by a need to focus on management and identify whether a unique style had been developed by small school headteachers to cope with the exigencies of their working environment. The methods chosen for the current evaluation, therefore, included:

- preliminary visits and interviews with a number of small school headteachers and classroom teachers
- a national postal survey which would access the views of headteachers in all small primary schools

- semi-structured interviews with headteachers in 18 case study schools
- data feedback to a further sample of headteachers to validate the emerging findings.

The main methods of collecting data are displayed in Appendix C. The survey included every small school in Scotland (569 schools with a roll of fewer than 60 pupils, and 324 with between 60 and 120 pupils). A total of 708 valid responses was received which is an overall response rate of 82% percent. This high response rate stands in contrast with both our expectations and results reported by other researchers. We anticipated that schools were beginning to feel 'over-researched' but the high response rate coupled with respondents' comments illustrate the importance which primary headteachers ascribe to this topic. Additionally, it may also be a reflection of the willingness of headteachers in small schools both to share information with, and learn from, each other. We view this as particularly encouraging.

Of the thirty schools which were withdrawn from our initial sampling frame, 26 no longer fitted the criterion of a roll of less than 121 pupils. In most cases this was due to a natural increase in pupil numbers, however in a few cases it was attributed to recent mergers. The four remaining schools had closed which seems to indicate that school closure is a fear rather than a reality for most of our sample. This may, of course, change as Education Authorities report increasing budgetary pressures (cf, for example, a comment from an assistant director of education in a rural authority: 'there is no political will [at education committee level] to close small schools at the moment, a situation that may change in the next three years...').

With this in mind, we now consider the other contextual issues which affect the research.

2: Small schools

The real problem is not technical change but the human changes that often accompany technical innovations.
Lawrence, 1979

2.1 The Scottish context

The aims of this research should be seen in the context of both the number and distribution of small primary schools throughout Scotland, and also the variety of initiatives which all schools have had to manage in recent years. Four initiatives are of particular concern: 5 - 14 Curricular Guidelines; School Development Planning; Staff Development and Appraisal; and Devolved School Management. In the 1993 school census, there were 2341 primary schools in Scotland, of which 569 had fewer than 60 pupils and another 324 schools had between 60 and 120 pupils: ie 38% of Scottish primary schools have fewer than 120 pupils. (Note that this total was revised during the current research as a consequence of school mergers and closures: at the time the research was carried out, there were, in all, 863 small schools, and the number continues to decline.) As one would expect, the majority of small primary schools are sited predominantly, but not exclusively, in rural regions. (Note that there is a tendency in the literature which fails to differentiate between rural schools and small schools.) As the census was conducted prior to the reorganisation of local government in 1996, it showed that Highland Region had 109 schools with rolls below 60 pupils; Grampian 85; Argyll and Bute 84; Tayside 60; Dumfries and Galloway 55 and the Western Isles 32. In those regions, the preponderance of small schools meant that managing a small school was not a minority experience for headteachers or the Education Authorities. This is a significant issue to which we will return in later sections when support mechanisms are reviewed. However, three regions in the more urban Central Belt — Fife, Lothian and Central regions, where most other schools are large — also, respectively, had 23, 27 and 23 small primary schools. In those regions the experience of managing a small school may be quite different. This is one of the issues which the research seeks to explore further.

The literature (see for example Somekh, 1995) suggests that location has a crucial role to play in the development of headteachers' managerial style: for example, Forsythe (1983) argues in an earlier study, respondents in the Highlands perceived their primary schools to be an important and integral part of their community. This may not be the case in smaller schools which are located close to urban centres, or where parental choice has resulted in a high proportion of pupils from outwith schools' traditional catchment areas.

Although legislation passed since 1988 has significantly altered the role of the headteacher, the status of parents has also changed through policy promoting parental choice of schools and School Board membership. Additionally, a more ancient statute continues to affect the organisation of education in Scotland and influences school size and distribution. The 1918 Education (Scotland) Act guaranteed Roman Catholics (approximately one sixth of the population) the right to separate schools funded by the state. (A summary of legislation and guidelines generally affecting Scottish headteachers' management role is included as Appendix A.)

It is, therefore, possible that both denominational and non-denominational primary schools may exist within relatively close proximity of each other, resulting in even smaller school rolls for the locality. How each is supported may be a significant factor in change management. Also, the siting of Gaelic medium units, sometimes as one composite class attached to a small primary school, is an additional factor which some headteachers must manage.

2.2 Headteachers' leadership style and career progression

The literature (Wallace, 1988 and 1989; Way, 1989; Galton, 1993) indicates that both managing and teaching in smaller schools is significantly different from management in larger schools. The duality of the role of teaching headteacher and vertical grouping of pupils are factors with which all small school headteachers must cope. In research of 5-14 undertaken by SCRE (Harlen and Malcolm, 1993), several other factors also appeared to influence the management of curricular innovation in general terms. Time, or lack of it, was, perceived to be an issue, and headteachers who teach for four, or four and a half, days per week, clearly have less time than their non-teaching colleagues.

It may also be the case that teachers and headteachers in small schools (and particularly small rural schools) have different career backgrounds and aspirations to those in larger schools. However, there is little published literature about the teachers who occupy these posts or the preparation they have received. Galton and Patrick (1993) in a study of 68 small primary schools from nine local education authorities in England conclude that teachers in small schools had similar backgrounds and experiences as those teaching in urban and suburban areas. They report that: [teachers in small schools] 'had similar qualifications, similar ages, attended the same number of in-service activities and also displayed similar values and concerns as before taking up their present posts'. However, it is not clear that this situation also pertains in Scotland.

Size of school and attitude towards headship may be related. Headship of a small school can be viewed in two distinct but not necessarily compatible ways: as an 'end of career' job – perhaps, associated with a life choice – or a route to 'bigger things' How the job is perceived, by teachers and Educational Authorities, will crucially affect the management style adopted and, ultimately, the curricular outcomes: we report our respondents' career aspirations in Chapter 4 below.

2.3 Management support and development

It has been argued that the management support and training needs of headteachers in small schools are very different from schools with non-teaching heads (Wallace, *op cit.*; Way *op cit.*). Their differential needs are now being recognised in a number of ways.

- Some former regions, for example Tayside and Ayrshire, had already organised schools into clusters which could share and rotate curriculum and staff development tasks and opportunities. However, as Galton (1993) points out clusters are no guarantee of development. They appear to work best where collaboration is not oversimplified and examples from Northern Norway (Solstad, 1992) highlight the importance of headteachers developing their concepts of headship within a framework of localised support structures.
- Prior to reorganisation, the Staff College in Strathclyde Region organised a One Hundred Club for schools with rolls of fewer than 100 pupils. The former Region offered reduced rates on management training courses for heads from those schools.
- The introduction to the SOEID Performance Indicators for Primary Schools includes different activities for headteachers in smaller schools, and 5-14 implementation documents include some case studies based upon small schools.
- Some areas (for example Argyll and Bute and former Tayside) built on the opportunities offered by new technology not only to create virtual classrooms but also to enable staff to network with their peers.

How these initiatives affect style and outcomes will be explored in later sections.

Finally, we must remember that School Boards, parents and the larger community can support headteachers in their management tasks, although these itself present a management challenge. As Southworth (1995) points out, in the context of English schools, there are differences between *working with* and *working on* governing bodies as they undertake their legal responsibilities.

2.4 Summary

Although there is relatively little published research on the management of small schools in Scotland, other literature, dealing generally with school management, or with small schools in England (see Appendix B) raises issues of significance for the research. These are summarised below.

- 38% of Scottish primary schools are small, with fewer than 120 pupils
- the past decade has resulted in policy changes, conceptual shifts and numerous innovations at school level
- managing change is a significant issue, especially for headteachers
- few specifically Scottish studies into the role(s) of the headteacher were identified
- the literature of management development in relation to larger schools may not be particularly helpful, and more relevant strategies embedded in the reality of small schools may need to be identified and developed to ensure continuing school improvement
- there is a need to identify and explore the particular strategies and activities which headteachers in small schools have developed to implement change.

In the following chapters, we turn to the evidence from the current research to explore the views of headteachers in small schools. By drawing on the results of the preliminary sensitising interviews, postal survey and case studies we address questions related to:

- who are the headteachers in Scottish small schools?
- what are their experiences and opinions?
- have they developed a unique style to manage change?

3: A picture of provision

In this chapter we provide a picture of small schools in Scotland as they existed in the autumn term of 1996. We drawn predominantly on data from a survey of all primary schools in Scotland with 120 or fewer pupils. At that time, there were 863 small schools of which 708 (82%) responded. The questionnaire, including a summary of responses, is displayed in Appendix D.

3.1 School size

Approximately two thirds of the schools surveyed could be classed as 'very small' schools: in other words, they had fewer than 60 pupils. To be precise, 447 schools (63%) fell into this category, while 257 schools (37%) had between 60 and 120 pupils. The very smallest schools had one pupil each: there were four schools in this position. The number of schools by size of pupil roll is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Number of schools by size of school roll

School roll	Number of schools n=704*	
1 to 25 pupils	179	(25%)
26 to 50 pupils	210	(30%)
51 to 75 pupils	143	(20%)
76 to 100 pupils	118	(17%)
101 to 120 pupils	54	(8%)

*The full number ('n') of schools or headteachers referred to in each table is noted in this way. The number varies from one table to another, depending on the number of headteachers who responded to each question.

Trends in school rolls

There is no clear trend towards either an increase or a decline in school rolls. The single largest group of respondents (51%) reported their school roll as fairly stable; 28% perceived their roll to be increasing; while 20% saw their roll as decreasing. However significant differences were found between the smallest schools (i.e. those with a roll below 60), and those with rolls of 60–120. Larger schools were more likely to report an increasing roll compared with small schools (approximately a ratio of 3:2). Smaller schools on the other hand were more likely to report a decline in comparison with larger schools (ratio of 3:2). It is therefore not surprising that while 23% of all respondents agreed with the statement that 'the threat of school closure is never very far from our minds', the majority of those were from schools with rolls of under 60 pupils as opposed to those with larger rolls (a ratio of 3:1). Catchment area makes little difference here: 23% of rural and island school headteachers feel that the threat of closure is never far away, compared with 25% of schools from 'mixed' and urban

locations. (In the context of school location, 'mixed' refers to schools whose catchment area includes both rural and urban elements.) We would suggest, therefore that uncertainty about a school's future may affect managerial vision – an issue which is explored in more detail in Chapter 5.

3.2 Teacher numbers

The number of teachers in each small school ranged from 1 to 10. Seventy schools were single-teacher schools, which arguably can represent the most complex management challenge, *viz.* coping alone with a range of management innovations while at the same time organising a curriculum for the widest age range of pupils. In total, 430 responses were from schools with no more than three teachers including the headteacher, a category which represents 62% of the sample. This group is clearly comparable with the number of schools with 60 pupils or fewer (63% of the sample: see Section 3.1 above.) Table 3.2 illustrates the number of schools by size. (It should be noted that headteachers were asked to report the number of teachers working in the school, not the full time equivalent [FTE]. Provisional data from the 1997 school census, provided by the Educational Statistics branch of the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department, show that the average number of teachers employed by schools with fewer than 60 pupils is 2.5 - an average pupil: teacher ratio of 12.5:1. The average number of teachers employed by schools with between 60 and 120 pupils is 5 - an average pupil: teacher ratio of 16.9:1.)

Table 3.2: Number of schools with 1–10 teachers

Size of school	Number of schools n=692	
1 teacher school	70	(10%)
2 teacher school	201	(29%)
3 teacher school	159	(23%)
4 teacher school	116	(17%)
5 teacher school	78	(11%)
6 teacher school	43	(6%)
7 teacher school	15	(2%)
8 teacher school	6	(1%)
9 teacher school	1	(<1%)
10 teacher school	3	(<1%)

The largest single group in the sample is the two-teacher school (201 schools). There is, perhaps, an argument for using two- and three-

teacher schools as exemplars for the development of appropriate management materials which we will consider in Chapter 8.

3.3 Location

The schools' catchment areas broadly reflect the overall distribution of small schools in Scotland: (79%) rural, (10%) island, (6%) mixed, (3%) town and (1%) city location.

Table 3.3: Distribution of small schools in Scotland by Education Authority

Education Authority	No. of Schools n=707	% of Sample	% of schools in Education Authority	Education Authority	No. of Schools	% of Sample	% of schools in Education Authority
Highland	104	15	54	South Ayrshire	14	2	31
Aberdeenshire	86	12	53	North Lanarkshire	10	1	8
Dumfries and Galloway	69	10	59	Midlothian	10	1	27
Argyll and Bute	60	8	78	North Ayrshire	10	1	19
Perthshire and Kinross	39	6	50	East Lothian	8	1	24
Scottish Borders	38	5	52	East Ayrshire	7	<1	14
Angus	33	5	52	Falkirk	7	<1	15
Fife	33	5	23	Aberdeen City	4	<1	6
Western Isles	31	4	70	Edinburgh City	4	<1	4
Shetland	30	4	86	Renfrewshire	4	<1	8
South Lanarkshire	28	4	22	Clackmannanshire	3	<1	15
Moray	20	3	40	Dumbarton and Clyde	3	<1	9
West Lothian	18	3	27	Glasgow City	2	<1	<1
Stirling	16	2	34	East Dunbartonshire	1	<1	3
Orkney	14	2	56	East Renfrewshire	1	<1	4

We see that although most small schools are in rural or island areas, a significant minority (10%) is located in urban or mixed areas. This represents 72 schools and demonstrates that the small school is not an exclusively rural phenomenon. A complete list of schools by unitary Education Authority is shown in Table 3.3 above.

In general the smallest schools are often sited in the most remote localities. While 41% of the sample described their schools as geographically isolated, headteachers in schools with a roll of below 60 were more likely to report this than their colleagues in schools of between 61 and 120 pupils (ratio of 5:3 respectively). Survey participants were asked to comment on whether they felt geographical isolation to be a problem for their schools. The responses indicate that *feeling* isolated does not necessarily correspond to physical location.

Just over half (53%) of all headteachers in the survey felt that geographical isolation was a problem for them. While the majority (62%) of those whose schools are in remote areas felt this way, a substantial minority of remote school headteachers were not troubled by this. Of those whose schools were *not* in remote areas, almost half (47%) also felt that geographical isolation was a problem. More surprising still is the finding that schools in 'mixed' or urban areas are *more* likely than schools in rural or island areas to be concerned about geographical isolation, as is shown in Table 3.4 below:

Table 3.4: Problems of geographical isolation by catchment area

Catchment area group	% of each catchment group concerned about geographical isolation
'Mixed' and urban catchment areas (n=70)	58
Island catchment areas (n=70)	53
Rural catchment areas (n=550)	52

This suggests that factors other than physical location contribute to perceptions of isolation. In Chapter 5, we explore the influence of management experience and training on feelings of geographical isolation, and in Chapter 7, the role of support structures in helping to overcome it.

3.4 Facilities

Resource management is an important aspect of a headteacher's role in a small school. As our respondents pointed out in the preliminary interviews, they are unlikely to have the services of a full-time janitor. Additionally, lack of resources can impact upon the curriculum. In the survey, headteachers were asked if they perceived their schools' accommodation or facilities to be inadequate. Most appeared to be satisfied with the accommodation generally, but a fifth (20%) reported poor or inadequate accommodation, and almost half (47%) were dissatisfied with facilities for games/physical education. As shown in Table 3.5 below, headteachers in schools with smaller rolls were most likely to report inadequate facilities for games: 53% of schools with a roll of up to 59, compared with 34% between 60 and 120 pupils. In the preliminary interviews, one respondent commented that while adequate provision for games could be provided during summer months, problems arose when pupils had to remain indoors. In a previous study (Wilson *et al*, 1995), a headteacher facing similar problems reported using DSM money to build a path to the local village hall in order to utilise facilities during the winter months. Such problems are indicative of the challenge of managing a balanced curriculum faced by headteachers in small schools.

Interestingly, the situation is reversed with respect to accommodation in general. Inadequate accommodation was more likely to be experienced by schools with larger rolls: 17% of schools up to 59 pupils, as opposed to 25% of schools above 60. There is insufficient evidence to explain the differences: it may be related to the availability of spare capacity which allows headteachers greater flexibility in managing group work.

Table 3:5: Headteachers' perceptions of poor or inadequate facilities

	Schools with fewer than 60 pupils (n=447)	Schools with 60 to 120 pupils (n=257)	Full sample (n=704)
Inadequate facilities for games/PE	53%	34%	47%
Poor/inadequate accommodation	17%	25%	20%

3.5 Summary

In this chapter we have provided a picture of small schools in Scotland in late 1996. The main points are summarised below.

- In 1996, there were 863 primary schools in Scotland with fewer than 121 pupils, of which 63% had fewer than 60 pupils and 37% had between 60 and 120 pupils.
- Headteachers perceive rolls to be stable in approximately half (51%) of the small schools, on the increase in 28% and in decline in 20%. Very small schools (i.e. those with fewer than 60 pupils) are more likely to report declining rolls than larger schools.
- The number of teachers employed in small schools ranges from 1 to 10 (including the headteacher). The majority (62%) have 3 teachers or fewer. One-teacher schools make up 10% of small schools.
- Most small schools are in rural or island locations (89%). Highland, Aberdeenshire, Dumfries & Galloway and Argyll & Bute have the largest numbers of small schools; but Shetland, Argyll & Bute and the Western Isles have the highest percentages of small schools.
- A substantial proportion of small schools (41%) are to be found in geographically isolated locations. The smallest schools (i.e. those with a roll of under 60 pupils) are more likely to be geographically isolated than those with a roll of 60 to 120 pupils. *Feeling* geographically isolated does not necessarily correspond to remote location.

In the next section, we turn to the career experiences and aspirations of the headteachers who manage these schools.

4: A view of headship

The job came up and I had never ever in my whole life even thought of promotion in any way because I was completely happy in the classroom. And I was given encouragement through my family, and also through people in education...and I did get, people in the town itself, you know people within the community actually encouraged me.

female, headteacher, under 60 pupil school

As we saw from the literature (Chapter 2 and Appendix B), there is limited information on the backgrounds, qualifications, experiences and aspirations of headteachers of small schools – all factors which may affect their management styles. However, one study (Galton, 1993) reports that in most respects teachers of small schools are similar to those in larger schools. Our evidence suggests that this may not be the case in Scotland.

4.1 Characteristics of small school headteachers

Gender

In the survey, 81% percent of respondents were female, 19% male. This finding differs both from the gender balance nationally in primary school teaching (92% female and 8% male), and from the national picture of primary headteachers (73% female, 27% male: see The Scottish Office, *Statistical Bulletin* Edn G5/1996/2). However, in small schools with 4 teachers or more the balance of male (24%) and female (76%) headteachers is close to the national figure. It is clear that the smaller school, the more likely it is that a woman will be headteacher, although even in the smallest schools (i.e. those with fewer than 60 pupils), there is still an over-representation of male heads (16%), given the overwhelmingly female primary teacher population.

Age

Most survey respondents (68%) were aged between 35 and 50 suggesting that a substantial number became teachers before teaching in Scotland became an all-graduate profession in 1984/85.

Qualifications and early career histories

The overwhelming majority of headteachers (85%) had attended a Scottish College of Education, and although 77% possessed a College Diploma in Education, over a third (35%) were graduates (B.Ed., M.A., or M.Ed.). A substantial number (41%) possessed more than one qualification. This contrasts with Southworth's (1995) research into headship in the 1990s in which only one of his ten headteachers was a graduate. A small proportion (10%) had gained qualifications from a higher education institution in England, but there were relatively few

Open University graduates (5% of all participants) – a method of study which might have appealed to teachers in isolated areas.

From the 'case study' interviews, it emerged that small school headteachers had quite diverse career histories. Although the majority had been primary teachers throughout their careers, a small number had worked in other sectors at the start of their careers: in industry, youth work, community development and child-care. Most 'case study' headteachers had worked in several schools before taking up their current posts, and several drew attention to the breadth of their experience: some had worked in very different types of schools, specifically mentioning larger schools and city schools, sometimes in areas of considerable deprivation; others had worked both in the classroom and as peripatetic teachers; and several had been curriculum development officers. There may, in fact, be a relationship between the breadth of previous experiences and the ability to manage the range of activities demanded of headteachers of small schools. The following give a 'flavour' of the range of career histories encountered in the course of the case study interviews:

I started life in a large, inner-city school...and then left teaching to have children. I did various jobs in between, including working for an insurance company and being manager of a small company. I decided to go to university and do a part-time degree while I was doing supply teaching... (School 2: 28 pupils)
I came to teaching late. I went to university and then worked at a Steiner school. I worked on various things, playschemes, in hotels, then as nursery assistant in a children's home for babies...so I trained at Moray House. (School 7: 106 pupils)

Rural roots

A substantial number of headteachers (41%) came originally from rural areas, and almost a third (31%) had, themselves, been educated in small primary schools. From interviews with 'case study' headteachers, it is clear that this is one factor which has influenced their decision to work in small, rural schools. As two recall:

It sounds very sentimental to say so, but as a child I went to a four-teacher school in the countryside and I had very fond memories of it. (School 1: 58 pupils)
I was brought up in the village, and have been headteacher at the school for 24 years. I have no desire at all to leave...My loyalty would always be here. (School 8: 11 pupils)

However, the majority of respondents (71%) reported living outwith their schools' catchment area. This was more common among headteachers working in 'mixed' or urban schools (85% lived outwith the school's catchment area) than those in rural schools (71%). However, two thirds (66%) of island school headteachers – perhaps not surprisingly – did live in their school's catchment area. The decision to live elsewhere may reflect a lack of suitable accommodation, particularly where 'school houses' have been sold by Education Authorities; or may be associated with a desire for privacy for themselves and their families. As some 'case study' heads suggested:

I much prefer [living outside the village] because once you leave you can say 'Right, I'm not really at anybody's beck and call.' (School 3: 57 pupils)

When I drive home – 14 miles – I just change into me, I change from being 'Mrs Jones' to 'Mum' or 'Mary' or whatever. (School 4: 118 pupils)

Clearly, if the headteacher lives elsewhere, this may have implications for community relationships – an issue we will consider in Section 7.4.

4.2 Routes to headship

Management experience

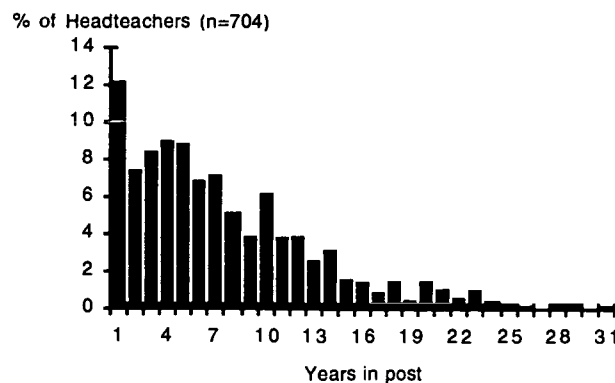
Relatively few respondents (18%) had previous experience of headship. For the majority (82%) their current post was their first headship. The range of management experiences reported by the minority of headteachers, who had previously held promoted posts, is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Previous management experiences of small school headteachers

Experiences	Number of headteachers n=126	
Headship in another small school	47	(37%)
Headship in single-teacher school	26	(21%)
Headship (unspecified)	21	(17%)
Acting headteacher	15	(12%)
Headship in larger school	10	(8%)
Head of teaching department	3	(2%)
Deputy headship	3	(2%)
Headship in small special school	1	(<1%)

Most (75%) headteachers had been in their current post for ten years or less, and a distinctive minority (12%) were particularly new to the job, having taken up post during the past year. A similarly small but distinctive group (10%) had been in post for 16 years or more, as is shown in Figure 4a.

Figure 4a: Headteachers' years in post



That suggests that differentiated staff development may be required to meet disparate needs, an issue we shall return to in Chapter 7.

Management training

Most headteachers (79%) reported that they had received some form of management training. However, it seems likely that for many headteachers, training occurs some time *after* they take up post. Those least likely to have had training are those who have been in post for one year or less, as is shown in Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2: Management training in relation to length of time in post

Length of time in current post	% of respondents with management training (n=448)
1 year or less	43
2–5 years	85
6–10 years	87
11–15 years	83
16–20 years	77
21 years or over	73

Those who have been in post for over 11 years are also progressively less likely to have received training. Though the 'falling off' seems relatively gradual, the implications are more serious than at first appears, as headteachers with longer service should have had more opportunities to undergo training. A possible explanation was offered by several headteachers:

At that time [18 years ago] it was the norm to go into headship from class teaching – there were no senior teacher posts – and I received no special training or preparation for headship. (School 9: 80 pupils)

New headteachers have better preparation now than I did – there was no training and I moved from an unpromoted post straight into the headship. (School 8: 11 pupils)

Some indicated that a form of informal mentoring had been particularly valuable to them, before they applied for their current posts:

I was lucky to have been placed with a young and able headteacher. I learnt more from her than I did in all my years of training. (School 12: 77 pupils)

However, there was no mention by respondents of formally organised mentoring arrangements to support new headteachers even though some Education Authorities have adopted such schemes. Validation questionnaire respondents were divided as to the value of modelling practice on that of other headteachers: 40% believed that this was helpful, but 55% disagreed and 5% did not comment. Comments suggest that those who had been fortunate enough to work with positive role models support mentoring but others argued that

circumstances vary so much from one school to another that it is hard to identify what skills and qualities can be transferred.

Views on the value of available training are mixed. Sixty-seven percent of headteachers believe that management training needs to be adapted for the heads of small schools. (Interestingly, this view was held equally firmly by those who had and had not received management training.) Three quarters (75%) of validation questionnaire respondents were dissatisfied with the induction training and development provided for newly appointed heads, either because it was non-existent, or because it did not take small schools into account. In interview, some headteachers explained why they thought training needs to acknowledge the needs of headteachers in small schools:

I've completed the 'Principles of Management' Scottish Office training, but...There is a team-wide gap 'them and us' attitude between heads in larger schools and their staff. This is untenable in a small school setting. (School 11: 18 pupils)

[Talking about a recent course] I just wonder if [tutors] are aware of the situation in small rural schools where there is the wide range of all the ages and ability levels. (School 14: 21 pupils)

Some interviewees highlighted training which did recognise the different needs of headteachers in small schools, such as the Lothian Training Pack for Small Schools. Others mentioned the importance of more general benefits from attending training courses such as the opportunity to discuss ideas with other headteachers. One head explained that she had taken two University Diploma courses in management – one on general management and one designed for headteachers – precisely because, as the head of a small school, she felt isolated and in need of wider professional development:

I found that in the beginning, when I came here, it was quite lonely. It was very small, and there wasn't really, for me, enough spin offs from other people... [I went to the University] really to keep myself abreast of what was happening and to be able to talk to other professionals. (School 15: 42 pupils + 10 PT nursery pupils)

4.3 Future career plans

Previous research suggests that headteachers of small schools, once appointed, are more likely to remain in the same post for long periods of time than their counterparts in larger schools. The single largest group of respondents to our survey (44%) expected to stay on as heads of the schools in which they were currently working for the foreseeable future. In addition, 17% had no clear plans, and 8% intended to seek early retirement. Approximately a quarter of the group were considering promotion: 21% by applying for headship of a larger school, and 3% seeking other employment within education. In addition, a small group (3%) of heads were thinking of applying for the

headship of other small schools (a sideways move). Less than 1% were seeking employment outwith education. Clearly, other factors, such as the proportion of headteachers with roots in rural communities as discussed in Section 4.1 above, tend to produce a less mobile workforce in small rural schools. This has implications for the design of staff training and development schemes.

The location of schools appears to be a factor in headteachers' career plans. Headteachers of island schools seem to be particularly committed to their current posts, and very much less likely to wish to move on to a larger school, as can be seen from Table 4.3 below:

Table 4.3: Career plans of headteachers in different locations (n=639)

	Remain in current post (%)	Move to larger school (%)	Move to another small school (%)	No clear plans (%)	Early retirement (%)	Other* (%)
Rural	43	23	3	17	9	5
Mixed	45	26	3	15	5	6
Island	54†	6†	5	16	9	10
All	44	21	3	17	8	7

*This category includes those thinking of other employment within or outwith education.

†These figures indicate substantial differences between headteachers in island schools and others.

Evidence suggests that those who intend to remain in the same post do so from choice rather than lack of opportunity: only 6% of those taking part agreed with the statement that 'small school heads never go on to more senior positions in education'. It was obvious from the interviews that many headteachers enjoy their work and have no wish to move. One pointed out that headship of a small school was 'something I have wanted to do for a long time' (School 1: 58 pupils), and another that she 'wouldn't go back to a city' (School 14: 21 pupils). Some interviewees had more pragmatic reasons for wanting to stay, for example, having recently undergone a school inspection and having no desire to replicate the experience.

However, as we have seen, there is a significant but ambitious group of headteachers (21%) who plan to move on to larger schools. Some acknowledge that their motives for taking up small school headships are strategic, seeing small schools as stepping stones to larger ones. Others feel that they need a new challenge to avoid 'stagnation' (School 6:18 pupils). One reflected that:

I love it here at 'School 7' but I feel frustrated at times because the fact that I am a teaching headteacher limits what I can do... so at some time it will be good to have a change and a move. (School 7: 106 pupils)

For some it may be that the difficulty of reconciling teaching and managing pushes them to consider a non-teaching appointment. Some interviewees pointed to this as a major source of stress:

I have to come to terms with whether I am the headteacher or the teacher. The most difficult task is dividing management time and teaching time. (School 6: 18 pupils)

However, although two thirds (66%) of respondents indicated that they felt more stressed than they used to, this group was equally divided between those who planned to apply for non-teaching headships in larger schools (22% of the group) and those who did not (21% of the group). Those who felt stressed were, however, more likely to wish to leave their current posts: 62% of those under stress indicated that they wished to move on. The full picture of future career plans for headteachers who felt under stress and those who did not is indicated in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Stressed and unstressed headteachers' future plans

	Stressed Hts (n=470)	Unstressed Hts (n=238)
Plan to apply for headship in a larger school	22%	21%
Plan to remain in current post	38%	55%
Plan to seek early retirement	12%	1%
No clear plans	19%	12%
Other plans	9%	11%

4.4 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the characteristics and career patterns of headteachers in small primary schools in Scotland. The main points are summarised here.

- Proportionately more headteachers of small schools, and particularly of very small schools (under 60 pupils) are female compared with the national average.
- Most headteachers of small schools are aged between 35 and 50.
- The majority hold a Diploma in Education from a Scottish College of Education, although early career histories are very varied.
- Just under a half of headteachers of small schools originate in rural areas; and approximately a third were educated in small primary schools. It is, however, now relatively unusual for headteachers of small schools to live within the catchment areas of their schools. This appears to reflect – at least in part – a desire for privacy.
- Relatively few headteachers of small schools have held management posts prior to their appointment.

- Although just under half had been in post for five years or less, with 12% appointed within the past year, a further 10% had been in post for longer than 16 years.
- Most headteachers in small schools have received some form of management training, but this tends to take place some time after their appointment. The majority (two thirds) feel that management training should be adapted to meet the needs of headteachers in small schools.
- Many headteachers (just under half) hope to remain in their current posts indefinitely. Approximately a quarter are considering promotion, either to a larger school or elsewhere in education. Many headteachers enjoy their work and are happy in their current schools. Some, however, find it difficult to balance the teaching and management elements of the job, and those who feel stressed are more likely to want to leave their current posts.

We move on in the next section to consider ways in which this group of small school headteachers has managed change.

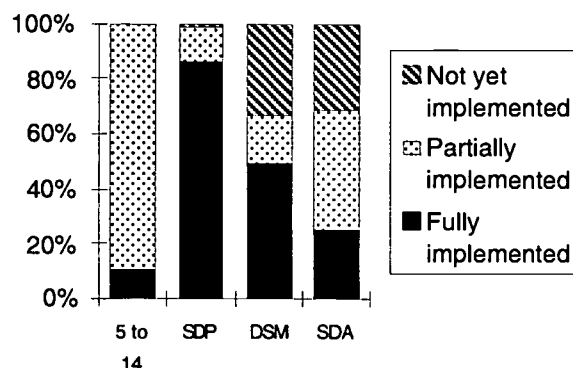
5: Managing change

In previous chapters we presented a picture of small schools and the headteachers who manage them, highlighting the distinctive features of each. In this chapter we move on to consider how change has been managed. In particular, we focus on the four major educational initiatives which headteachers have been asked to implement – 5-14 Curriculum Guidelines, School Development Planning (SDP), Devolved School Management (DSM) and Staff Development and Appraisal (SDA). For all schools (large or small), the past decade has been a period of rapid change in terms of both the curriculum and school management, and this chapter also examines perceptions of the pace of change among headteachers of small schools. Finally, headteachers' views on each of the four major initiatives and their management approaches are identified.

5.1 Four major initiatives

At the time of the survey, most headteachers reported that they had either fully or partially implemented the four major initiatives: 5-14, SDP, DSM and SDA, as is shown in Figure 5a.

Figure 5a: Extent of implementation of four major initiatives in small schools throughout Scotland in December 1996



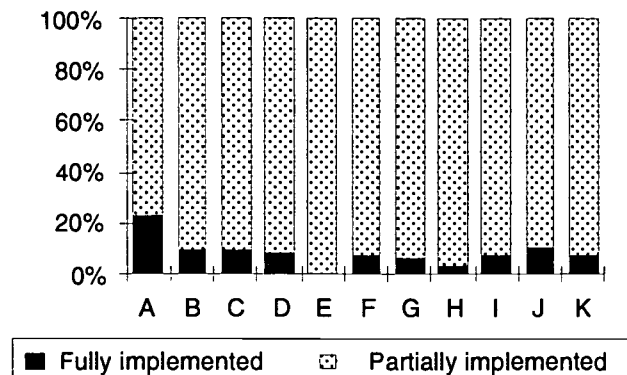
Small schools were furthest ahead with the full implementation of SDP, although a very small proportion (1%) had not implemented this at all. All schools had at least partially implemented 5-14 Curriculum Guidelines (90%) and a minority of headteachers (10%) claimed to have fully implemented them. Headteachers may have interpreted 'partially' and 'fully' in different ways, however, as the staggering of 5-14 would have made it difficult for any school to have implemented everything within the guidelines. Those who claimed that they had fully implemented the changes may therefore have intended this to mean as far as they were able to do so at the time; while others at the same stage, aware that more would need to be done in the future, may have responded that they had partially implemented the initiative.

Overall, differences in the extent of implementation of the four initiatives may, in part, result from historical factors. The 5-14 Curriculum Guidelines and SDP were introduced earlier than DSM and SDA, and it is therefore not surprising that schools were further ahead with these two. Almost half (49%) of the headteachers said that they had fully implemented DSM, and 18% had partially implemented it. A quarter of all respondents (25%) reported the full implementation of SDA, and just under half (44%) had partially implemented it.

The overall implementation rates reported in Table 5a above mask considerable variation across Education Authorities. (see Figures 5b – 5e) In some authorities, DSM was phased in thus allowing small schools to wait until later phases of implementation. (Additionally, the national deadline for implementation in small schools was extended to 1998.) SDA was launched and then relaunched as Staff Development and Review in January, 1998. By concentrating on the 'top eleven' Education Authorities viz. those with the highest percentage of small schools, we see that some authorities are much further ahead than others. (It is important to bear in mind, that data relate only to the small schools within each Education Authority, not to the total primary school population. A table showing the number of small schools per Authority and the percentage of small schools, compared with large, in each Authority is to be found in Chapter 3 [Table 3.3]. The ten Authorities with the largest number of schools in absolute terms are Highland, Aberdeenshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Argyll and Bute, Perthshire and Kinross, Scottish Borders, Angus, Fife, the Western Isles and Shetland. The list of those with the proportion of small schools in relation to large is virtually unchanged, with the exclusion of Fife, whose 33 small schools make up 23% of the total number of schools in the Authority, and the inclusion instead of Orkney, whose 14 small schools make up 56% of the total number in the Authority. These eleven Authorities therefore form the 'top 11' discussed here.)

Figure 5b shows that full or partial implementation of 5-14 was fairly evenly reported across the eleven Education Authorities with the exception of Authorities A (23% full implementation) and E (none fully implemented)

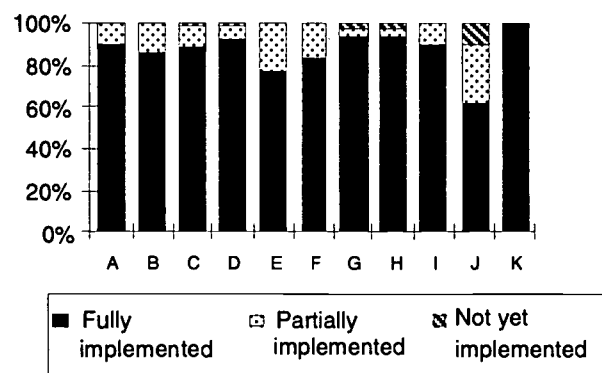
Figure 5b: Extent of implementation of 5-14 across 'top 11' Education Authorities



Such regional variation may reflect differences in the ways in which the implementation of 5-14 has been presented to staff in these two Education Authorities.

Figure 5c shows that the implementation of School Development Planning across the eleven Education Authorities is also relatively even.

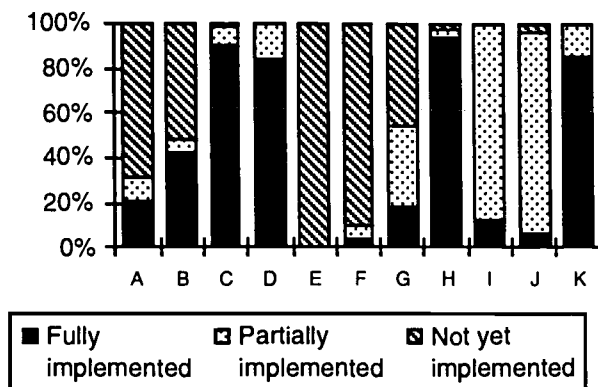
Figure 5c: Extent of implementation of SDP across 'top 11' Education Authorities



However, implementation seems to be markedly behind in Education Authority J, where headteachers were least likely to report full implementation (62% of those participating).

As expected, the extent of implementation of DSM varies considerably from one Education Authority to another, as can be seen in Figure 5d.

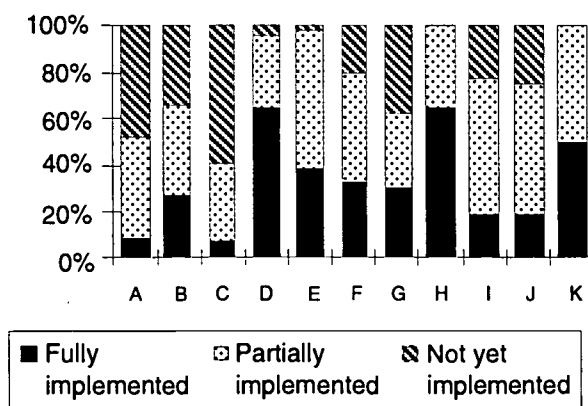
Figure 5d: Extent of implementation of DSM across 'top 11' Education Authorities



Headteachers from Education Authorities C, D, H and K report high rates of full implementation (90%, 84%, 95% and 86%) respectively. In contrast, DSM has not been implemented at all in Education Authority E, and by very few schools (10%) in Education Authority F. These differences are undoubtedly related to different approaches to the phasing in of DSM in these Education Authorities. For example, Education Authority F excluded small schools from the first phases of implementation and was – according to one of the ‘case study’ headteachers from this Education Authority – making a case for permanent exemption.

As Figure 5e shows, there is also considerable variation in the implementation of SDA from one Education Authority to another.

Figure 5e: Extent of implementation of SDA across 'top 11' Education Authorities



All headteachers in Education Authority H reported either full (65%) or partial (35%) implementation of this initiative, and almost all in Education Authorities D (96% fully or partially) and E (97% fully or partially). In contrast, approximately half of the headteachers in Education Authorities A and C said that they had not yet implemented SDA at all (48% and 59% respectively). These differences are likely to relate to delays in the introduction of the scheme outwith the control of small school headteachers.

How did headteachers themselves feel about the changes they were expected to implement? Did they rise to – and enjoy – the challenge, or has the experience been a stressful one? These issues are explored in Sections 5.2 and 5.3 below.

5.2 A climate of change

Headteachers of small schools believe that the last decade (1987 to 1996) has been a period of very rapid curricular and management change, and feel that these changes have outstripped changes in wider society: almost all respondents (96%) viewed the period as a time of rapid curricular change, and a substantial majority (92%) saw it as a time of rapid management change. In contrast, less than half (40%) felt it had been a time of rapid societal change. It was very widely held (by 94% of those taking part in the survey) that these changes had resulted in particular pressures for small schools, and, as we have seen in the previous chapter, two thirds of the group (66%) felt more stressed than they had before. Perceptions of rapid change and of stress may be linked to the rate of implementation of new initiatives.

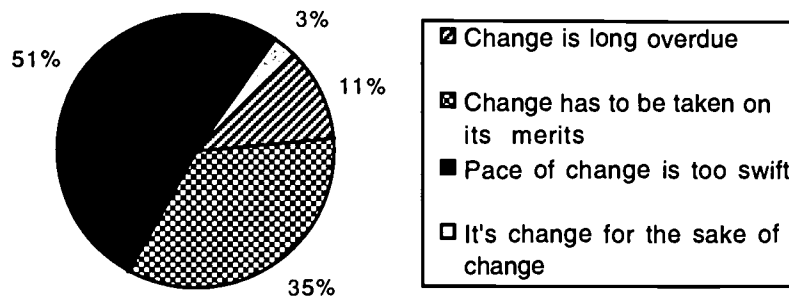
5.3 Attitudes towards change

Writers on management change (Handy, 1994; Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992) recommend that changes should be 'owned' by those charged with their implementation. This is exemplified by one headteacher who suggests that:

Before I would try and implement change I would have to be at ease with it myself. I need to spend time for me to be sure I understand exactly what's being asked and whether I can do it and whether I can make it work in my school or not...(Headteacher, school 60–120 pupils)

We asked small school headteachers about their attitudes towards recent initiatives. When interpreting responses to this question, it must be borne in mind that they were asked to choose only one statement which best reflected their attitude. Although this provides us with a quick summary of predominant attitudes regarding the changes, it is most likely that respondents in fact agreed with more than one of the statements at the same time or over a period of time. The largest group of respondents, (52%) identified change as problematic because of the pace of change and lack of time in which to achieve it.

Figure 5f: Headteachers' perceptions of recent changes



This suggests that the development of underlying support for the initiatives may have been impeded by the practicalities of implementation. As one headteacher put it:

Although I agree with the philosophy [5-14]...there is simply not enough time to cover all the targets. TIME, TIME, TIME – there is not enough hours in the day (Headteacher, 19 pupil school)

Just over one third of the group (35%) concurred with the statement that each change must be taken on its own merit and adapted according to need. A minority of respondents (11%), were enthusiastic about the changes, viewing them as both long overdue and as simply formalising good practice. Conversely, a very small minority (3%) perceived the changes as self perpetuating or serving no real purpose. It is notable that most headteachers were not resistant to change, *per se*, (cf. Lawrence, 1969) but to the time scale in which they were asked to respond. As one reported: 'there has been so much piled on in the last few years that you have to stop at some point and say "wait the now, we can't take any more"' (headteacher, 60–120 pupil school).

We now look at the management activities which headteachers developed to help them manage change.

5.4 Implementing the initiatives

Headteachers reported using a range of management activities to implement each of the four initiatives, drawing on available support and expertise, both internally within their schools and externally from education bodies, professional networks and parents. The full range of activities used is shown in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Management activities used for the implementation of the major initiatives
(n=704)

Management activity	Used at least once (%)	Overall rank
informal discussions with other headteachers	96	1
advice from EDS/ EAs	91	2=
documentation	90	2=
formal consultation with staff	91	4
informal discussion with staff	89	5
target setting	84	6=
written strategies	87	6=
informal discussions with friends	74	8
informal discussions with parents	80	9
delegation	72	10=
clerical support	77	10=
development groups	77	12
personal development	64	13
formal consultation with parents	67	14
HMI	38	15
School Boards	42	16

The most popular activity overall is to discuss *implementation informally* with other headteachers. As we shall see in Chapter 7, networking of various kinds is very highly valued and may provide a means of overcoming the feelings of isolation reported in Chapter 3. What is perhaps more surprising is the relatively low numbers of headteachers who have drawn on advice from School Boards or HMI. The issues surrounding choices of particular strategies are explored in more detail in Chapter 7.

In this chapter, we focus now on the different management activities adopted by headteachers in relation to each of the four initiatives. Table 5.2 shows the percentage of headteachers using each activity, for each initiative.

Table 5.2: Management activities used for the implementation of each of the major initiatives (n = 704)

	5-14	rank	SDP	rank	DSM	rank	SDA	rank	Overall rank
	%		%		%		%		
Informal discussions with other HTs	94	(1)	81	(3)	60	(1=)	57	(1=)	1
Advice from EDS/ EAs	86	(4)	84	(1)	49	(4=)	54	(3=)	2=
Documentation	88	(3)	77	(4=)	52	(3)	57	(1=)	2=
Formal consultation with staff	89	(2)	82	(2)	37	(7)	53	(5)	4
Informal discussion with staff	78	(5=)	74	(7)	49	(4=)	54	(3=)	5
target setting	74	(7=)	77	(4=)	18	(12)	37	(7)	6=
written strategies	78	(5=)	77	(4=)	17	(13)	32	(8)	6=
informal discussions with friends	72	(9)	52	(8)	39	(6)	39	(6)	8
informal discussions with parents	71	(10)	41	(10)	29	(8)	10	(13=)	9
delegation	61	(11)	45	(9)	22	(11)	22	(10)	10=
clerical support	37	(14)	37	(11)	60	(1=)	12	(12)	10=
development groups	74	(7=)	34	(12)	15	(15)	20	(11)	12
personal development	55	(13)	33	(13)	16	(14)	30	(9)	13
formal consultation with parents	56	(12)	33	(14)	23	(10)	4	(15)	14
HMI	35	(15)	28	(15=)	5	(16)	10	(13=)	15
School Boards	20	(16)	28	(15=)	26	(9)	3	(16)	16

Implementing 5-14

Headteachers tended to use more of the activities listed in Table 5.2 above to manage the implementation of 5-14 than for any other initiative. These higher figures no doubt reflect the fact that 5-14 is the longest running of the four initiatives, and had been fully or partially implemented by all respondents. It may also reflect the scale and complexity of this initiative.

'Development groups', including both clusters and other formal or informal school networks, were a commonly used mechanism to support the implementation. Headteachers stress the value of clusters and other networks for small schools because they enable teachers to share experiences and ideas, develop joint approaches and policies or even pool staff development and resource funding to provide more comprehensive support for the introduction of the initiative than would have been possible for individual small schools.

Some, however, encountered problems with clusters. These tended to occur where clusters were too large, dominated by larger schools with different perspectives, or where appropriate resourcing had not been made available. For example, in one Education Authority when funding for a cluster co-ordinator was removed, cluster meetings ceased to take place. Clearly it is important, as headteachers point out (cf. Galton *et al*, 1993) not to underestimate the practical difficulties of 'clustering'. Size, composition, location and attitudes contribute to the

efficacy of individual clusters and while many appear successful, other are less so.

From the case study interviews, we gain further glimpses into the management style of headteachers. A number began implementation of 5-14 with either formal or informal discussion amongst staff to identify existing strengths and weaknesses. However, the extent to which headteachers were then able to follow this up with delegation of development tasks depended on a number of factors. As we have seen already, where an effective cluster system was in place, this could be done at cluster level. Where schools had to attempt this on their own, it could be more difficult, particularly for one-teacher schools, or those which were borderline between one- and two-teacher status, because of fluctuations in the roll. For example, one headteacher of a two-teacher school could delegate very little because the other teacher was a probationer; and others felt that their staff already had too much work without taking on responsibility for implementing 5-14:

I can't give them any other responsibilities, because they already work so hard. I led the implementation – I felt I could not delegate. (School 7: 106 pupils)

Such perspectives help to explain why delegation has a relatively low ranking on the list (11th out of 16) but also suggest that headteachers in small schools need to be particularly skilful in prioritising and time-management.

While drawing on the advice of Educational Advisers and Development Officers ranks high on the list (4th out of 16), a number of 'case study' headteachers expressed concerns about cuts in this service. It had become much more difficult to identify advisers with responsibilities for particular curricular areas; and in-service on aspects of the curriculum was also less frequent, according to some interviewees. We explore this topic in more detail in Chapter 7.

To summarise from the 'case study' data, *management activities which have supported the implementation of 5-14* have included:

- starting the process by holding discussions with staff to audit existing practices in the school and develop a plan of action
- having a clear structure for introducing change with an appropriate, sustainable pace: in some cases this meant taking one subject at a time
- where possible, using team work within the school as a way of ensuring that all are involved and responsibilities shared
- using in-service and PAT time either to cover subject areas in a systematic manner, or as time for discussing school policy and making decisions
- drawing on team teaching, where possible with peripatetic or expert teachers, as a valuable way of introducing new approaches and supporting those with less experience of particular areas

- adopting a 'cascade' approach
- drawing on advice and support from secondary colleagues and from cluster groups (where cluster groups were large, some found it helpful to set up a small schools subgroup, as small schools' implementation strategies could differ from those of large schools).

Factors inhibiting implementation include:

- the view that the different needs of variable composite classes were not taken sufficiently into account in 5-14 documents
- the greater vulnerability of small schools to gaps in existing expertise and in opportunities to take up available training
- exacerbation of such problems by cuts in numbers of advisers and increased responsibilities for those remaining
- difficulty of planning the implementation of 5-14 effectively because of fluctuating staff numbers
- difficulty of in-depth discussion in large clusters
- failure in some clusters to share curricular resources.

Implementing SDP

As we saw earlier, the majority (86%) of respondents reported that they had fully implemented SDP, and the rest (bar 1%) that they had partially implemented it. Most 'case study' interviewees welcomed the initiative, feeling that it had provided them with a tool to control and focus their work. Patterns of implementation for SDP are also broadly similar to the overall pattern, although it is the only initiative where formal professional advice (from advisers or development officers) and formal consultation with staff are ranked first and second, before informal discussions with other headteachers. This would seem to relate to the nature of the initiative, which was perceived to work best when a common Education Authority-based format was adopted (and consequently advisers or development officers were likely to be the best informed) and which required schools to start by auditing existing practice (thus making it necessary to consult other staff – in all but one-teacher schools). 'Case study' data supports this finding: many headteachers commented that they began implementation by consulting all staff.

Setting targets is also an integral part of the initiative. A common theme from open response categories in the questionnaire was that the value of plans lay in setting 'targets which are manageable' and that it is 'extremely important not to take on too much.' Respondents, particularly those in one- or two-teacher schools, commented on the need to recognise the pace of change in small schools. For example, one reported: 'trying to fit in with the pace that people are happy to go at...' (School, 58 pupils).

Somewhat paradoxically, while development plans were welcomed if they reflected realistic targets and a more gradual pace of change, actually producing written plans increased headteachers' workloads. 'Case study' data shows that although many headteachers fully involved their staff in discussing and developing plans, most took on the task of writing the plans entirely on their own. Where planning formats were not made available, this was a particularly challenging task.

To overcome this, some respondents shared writing development plans with other members of a cluster and one suggested that SDPs should only be required every second year in small rural primary schools.

Consultation with School Boards, while still at the bottom of the ranking, was used a little more frequently for SDP than for the other initiatives. Some 'case study' evidence suggests that headteachers tend to 'inform' their School Boards of events in the school rather than to 'consult' them. For example, one described how she informed the Board that:

'This is what we propose to do,' and did they want a greater involvement. They were quite happy to progress in that way (School 5: 95 pupils)

Some headteachers may also use the school's development plan as a relatively concise way of accounting for their activities. (A more detailed account of the use of School Boards is in Chapter 7.)

To summarise from the 'case study' data, *management activities which have supported the implementation of SDP* have included:

- starting from SOEID performance indicators, and using these as a basis for audit
- adopting a planning format which is clear and concise
- not taking on too much at one time, and setting manageable targets (although this takes practice)
- accepting that the pace of change in very small schools is likely to be slower
- recognising also that, given the emphasis on personal relationships in a small staff group, it is important to start from teachers' strengths rather than to see SDP as a way of challenging practices
- where possible, sharing the work across clusters as an effective way of spreading the workload.

The principal *inhibiting factor* has been:

- the production of written plans, which has significantly increased headteachers' workloads.

Implementing DSM

Evidence suggests that headteachers hold very diverse views about DSM: in general many who have implemented the initiative welcome the opportunity to manage their own budgets; while some who have yet to implement it remain unsure of its value. As we have already seen, one third of respondents (33%) had not yet implemented DSM at the time the survey was carried out. Some were patently unconvinced. The headteacher at 'School 6' could see only that this would lead to mountains of paperwork and stressed that: 'there are some things [budgeting] that I just don't want to do'. (School 6:18 pupils).

Another headteacher noted that the Education Authority for whom she worked was seeking to exempt small schools from the initiative, and that she personally was not enthusiastic about DSM. She also felt it would add to stress and would require additional clerical support. She would not trust someone else to do this competently as she had never had any clerical support before and would worry about what might happen to the information if the auxiliary left. However, other headteachers who had yet to implement the initiative could be described as 'guardedly optimistic':

Ideally it gives you a greater freedom of how you spend your money – that should be the bonus... It would appear that the down side of this is a considerable amount of extra work.. (School 5: 95 pupils)

I would imagine it would increase my workload in the initial stages. It would also, I would hope, give me a lot more flexibility, you know, vire from one budget to the next and hopefully, if we can manage it well, there should be obvious benefits for the kids (School 17: 81 pupils)

In contrast, those who have begun to implement the initiative are – on the whole – very enthusiastic about the opportunity to manage their own budgets and decide spending priorities for themselves.

I was dreading it, but it's really quite interesting to see how we can make savings...I'm delighted about it. (School 3: 57 pupils)

The headteacher at 'School 18' volunteered to be in first phase of implementation and was pleased to find how simple it was to run, with computer and clerical support. She was convinced of the benefits:

Definitely, we have more money. Before it was just a per capita we had and here it could have been under £1000, depending on the number of children we had. We've been able to make savings in certain areas, for example, we have a 2% supply budget. ... I can't think of any drawbacks, not when you get more money for the school that you can use for the benefit of the children and resource it effectively. (School 18: 27 pupils)

Clearly, the provision of adequate clerical support is vital to the effective implementation of DSM: use of clerical support ranks first equal (with informal discussions with other headteachers) in the list of management activities associated with the implementation of DSM. 'Case study' data supports this finding, making clear that it is the combination of well-trained clerical workers and an efficient

computerised DSM system which has enabled the initiative to run smoothly: most of those engaged in implementing DSM commented on the efficiency of their clerical staff and the ease with which the auxiliaries (if not the heads themselves) operated the computer system. One head noted that although she had been allocated additional management time to deal with DSM, she had not had to use any of it because the clerk and the computer had taken care of everything. In contrast another headteacher had seen the abandonment of an efficient computerised system with local government reorganisation and a return, under the new Education Authority, to 'paper and pen', causing considerable confusion. Another, whose clerical worker had fallen ill, leaving the head to cope on her own, had also experienced a number of problems. Indeed the main concern of many of the 'case study' heads was what would happen if their clerical staff were ill or left the school. (Headteachers' use of clerical staff is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.)

It appears that headteachers are somewhat less likely to consult other members of staff formally about DSM, although informal discussions with teachers, friends and parents are relatively more common, than with other initiatives. 'Case study' data supports this finding, and suggests that some headteachers are enjoying the 'financial clout' which DSM has provided:

Power! Power! I could tell you what we've got in every wee facet of the budget ... I just have found it very, very interesting and I find myself able to remember figures and totals. It takes me aback the way I've absorbed it. ...I find it just excellent to say to my staff, 'Now how do you feel if we vire this thousand pounds from here and we get decorated?' (School 4: 118 pupils)

However, some 'case study' headteachers were more willing to share the decision-making, and, in some cases, to devolve the budget further, allocating money to individual teachers to spend as they wished:

We have a staff meeting to decide how the budget will be spent for central items (the library, staff development, etc.) The rest of the money goes to each teacher to spend as they choose. The clerkess has set up individual spreadsheets for each teacher. (School 13: 59 pupils)

Headteachers are also less likely to use target setting or produce a written strategy for DSM. This may reflect a degree of unfamiliarity with financial matters which makes it harder for headteachers to predict and plan financial 'strategies'.

Consultation with the School Board is ranked noticeably higher in relation to DSM than to the other initiatives (9th out of the 16). As with SDP it sometimes appears that 'consulting' the School Board often means informing them of decisions already taken:

They've to know what you spend your per capita on, and they say yes or no. I've a very good School Board and they trust me and everything's always fine, no problem (School 18: 27 pupils)

There is also evidence to suggest that School Board members are primarily interested in pragmatic issues rather than a detailed analysis of the curriculum. Where they can see a practical role for themselves, they are willing to step in. For example, in one 'case study' school, when the Board became aware of the savings which could be made, they volunteered to demolish some walls in preparation for construction work.

To summarise *management activities which have supported the implementation of DSM* have included:

- acquiring a good grounding in the practicalities of the system and making good use of information and advice available – for example from manuals or from education authority-based financial advisers
- ensuring adequate clerical support and effective training for clerical staff.

Inhibiting factors mentioned include:

- a fear that excessive reliance on the skills of school-based clerical staff may lead to problems if trained staff leave
- the failure to recognise that demands now made of clerical staff are not commensurate with their remuneration and that it may therefore be difficult to recruit suitable staff
- in some Education Authorities, regulations requiring clerical staff involved with DSM to be supervised personally by the head interfere with teaching time
- lack of an efficient computerised system.

Implementing SDA

As we saw earlier, a quarter (25%) of the headteachers who took part in the survey said that they had fully implemented SDA, and less than half (44%) had partially implemented it. Only five of the 18 'case study' interviewees had personal experience of SDA. Some of the others had begun implementation but the scheme had been frozen, while others had never been involved with SDA. Those with personal experience of SDA had found the scheme beneficial. One reported: 'it is hugely successful and very worthwhile' (School 5:95 pupils). Others commented that it had helped them focus their own development and boost staff morale.

Patterns of management activity to implement SDA are broadly similar to the overall pattern. Unsurprisingly, given the nature of the initiative, personal development ranks somewhat higher in relation to SDA than the other initiatives (9th compared with 13th overall). The limited evidence available from the 'case study' data suggests that some schools had begun to develop constructive approaches to

implementation. In one school, the senior teacher had trained staff from other schools in the cluster thus avoiding one of the expressed fears that staff in small schools have close relationships which might be damaged by formal appraisal mechanisms. Another had made explicit links between SDA target setting and 5-14 planning, pointing teachers in the direction of appropriate courses in the Education Authority's in-service directory.

The very low figures for formal consultations with parents and with School Boards reflect the sensitive nature of appraisal.

To summarise *management activities which have supported the implementation of SDA* have included:

- using team teaching (particularly across schools) as a way of raising awareness of teachers' own strengths and areas in which further development would be useful
- linking identified development needs with available staff development opportunities

The main *inhibiting factor* mentioned by headteachers is:

- the view that the close relationship between heads and staff may be jeopardised by a formal appraisal system: several heads pointed to the difficulty of resolving problems in a context in which maintaining good personal relationships is essential.

5.5 A profile of 'advanced' implementers of the four initiatives

In this last section of Chapter 5 we look at the management activities reported by a small group of 'advanced' implementers of the various initiatives. These are the 97 headteachers who reported that they had either fully implemented all four initiatives or fully implemented three and partially implemented the fourth. Although considerable caution must be exercised in interpreting these data because of the differential timescale of implementation of various initiatives across Education Authorities, it is interesting to identify the attitudes of the most experienced headteachers. In describing them as 'advanced' implementers, we refer only to their rate of implementation, not to their effectiveness.

Some differences between 'advanced' and 'less advanced' implementers emerge. (The 97 'advanced' headteachers who had either fully implemented all four initiatives, or fully implemented three and partially implemented one were compared with another group of 95 'less advanced' headteachers who had either partially implemented two or three initiatives, or fully implemented one initiative and, in some cases, partially implemented another. The tables showing the extent of proportional increases in the use of the

various management activities are reproduced in Appendix F [Table V:1].) 'Advanced' implementers are more likely to:

- use formal consultation with staff
- delegate
- draw up written strategies
- set targets
- consult School Boards and HMI

than those in the early stages of implementation. They are marginally less likely than those in the early stages of implementation to discuss things informally with other headteachers, staff, parents or friends.

In other sections (5.3 and Appendix B), we identified the importance of attitudes towards change. Interestingly, the group of 'advanced' implementers seem more self-confident. They agree that they:

- feel like heads of teams, rather than managers
- have become more confident after an inspection

Conversely, they are less likely than those in the early stages to think that headship of a small school is 'like being on a lonely crag', 'to find it hard to leave the classroom', to agree with the statement 'I don't have a team, I am the team', or to believe that children are more competent with computers than they are. The data suggest that 'advanced' implementers are more dynamic and positive thinking, with a tendency towards formalising management activities and making use of all available support. This may be because they have learned how to manage experientially and therefore, particular attention should be paid to supporting the least experienced group of managers – a point we shall return to in later Chapters (Chapter 7 and 8).

5.6 Summary

In this chapter we have seen ways in which headteachers in small schools across Scotland have implemented the four major new initiatives of recent years: 5-14, School Development Planning (SDP), Devolved School Management (DSM) and Staff Development and Appraisal (SDA). The main points to emerge are:

- Virtually all schools have either fully or partially implemented 5-14 and SDP. Implementation of the two more recently introduced initiatives, DSM and SDA, lags behind the other two.
- There is considerable variation in rates of implementation of DSM and SDA across Education Authorities, partly as a result of different policy approaches. In some Education Authorities, implementation of DSM in small schools has been delayed; and in others, SDA has been frozen pending the relaunch of the initiative in January 1998.

- There is little evidence to suggest that headteachers of small schools are resistant to change, although half of the respondents (51%) felt that the pace of change had been too swift.
- Headteachers made use of a range of management activities to implement the four initiatives. Overall, the most widely used activities include informal consultation with other headteachers, seeking advice from educational advisers and development officers, and studying the relevant documents associated with the new initiatives.
- There are, however, variations in the types of activity most frequently associated with each initiative. For example, the use of 'development groups' (clusters or other types of network) is closely linked to the implementation of 5-14; while making use of clerical support is paramount for DSM.
- Headteachers who have fully or virtually fully implemented all four initiatives are likely to be dynamic, positive-thinking people with a tendency to formalise management activities.

In this chapter we identified the set of management activities employed by small school headteachers to implement major changes, in the next Chapter we consider whether this constitutes a particular style of management.

6: A small school management style?

In Chapter 5, we looked at ways in which headteachers of small schools implemented the four major initiatives. This chapter explores the influence of the small school setting on headteachers' approach to management. The first three sections look at the implications for management of

- being a teaching headteacher
- working with low numbers of staff
- undertaking a wide range of tasks.

The last section summarises the management characteristics demonstrated by headteachers in this study and poses the question: is there a distinctive 'small school management style'?

6.1 The teaching headteacher

Balancing teaching commitments and management time

What quite clearly distinguishes headteachers of small schools from those of larger schools is the fact that all have a substantial teaching commitment. But the amount of time spent in the classroom varies. Headteachers in one- or two-teacher schools spend almost all of their time in the classroom, usually with half a day per week for management duties. In larger schools, management time rises to one or even two days per week. However, there are exceptions. The headteacher of 'School 8' (a one-teacher school) appeared to have no 'relief' time at all, while the head of 'School 4' (a five-teacher school) did not have a class of her own, although she spent a substantial period of time each morning providing learning support for pupils across the school. For most headteachers 'official' management time is very limited, reflected by over half of our respondents (52%) who said that they found it difficult to leave the classroom, and a substantial number (44%) indicated that they dealt with paper work 'when and if I can'. Furthermore, several headteachers from 'case study' schools explained that they used their 'official' management time to augment their teaching role in various ways. For example, the headteacher at 'School 10' used the time for team teaching, and the head at 'School 11' to take the pupils swimming.

Tensions between teaching and managing

Inevitably, many heads experienced tension between the demands made of them as teachers and as managers – a consequence of the duality of their role. Some experienced this primarily in relation to their teaching role: their commitment to their own class meant that the intrusion of management issues on class time was intensely frustrating:

I really, really love teaching and I think it is possibly my love of teaching that is causing this [frustration]. If you have prepared a science lesson on burning and oxygen and air – you've got glasses and candles and all this sort of thing, you have got the children more or less eating out of your hand – and the phone rings twice or three times. You have to restart the experiment three times and by that time your candle is soaking wet and it's not working you think, 'Sod this for a game of soldiers' really. That induces a lot of stress. (School 2: 28 pupils)

Others felt that they could do neither job well:

There isn't enough time to talk to people...Personally I never feel satisfied that I am either teaching or managing successfully. (School 7: 106 pupils)

Where this tension is combined with a lack of adequate clerical support, which can vary across Education Authorities, headteachers can struggle to meet the demands made on their time. As one explained: 'I don't have any clerical help and I think it is appalling'. (School 2:28).

For some, the difficulty of combining the two roles was pushing them to consider applying for jobs in larger schools, where they would not have to teach. However, it is important to recognise that not all teachers felt this way. Many headteachers in small schools are committed to teaching, in spite of the difficulties doing both jobs successfully, and would not consider a headship which did not allow them to continue to teach. Comments, such as: 'children are on many days my saving grace' (School 1: 58 pupils) and 'I enjoy being with the kids' (School 9: 80 pupils) are typical of many. Others concluded that finding ways of combining the roles – 'the changing of hats' – is what the job is about.

Advantages of being a teaching head: the 'curriculum leader' role

The predominance of teaching over management, in terms of 'official' time is likely to mean that these headteachers' perspectives on running their schools are qualitatively different from those of their colleagues in larger schools. Other studies – most notably Harlen and Malcolm (1993) – have argued that this feature, which has tended to be perceived as particularly problematic for heads of small schools, should also be seen as a strength. Particularly in relation to 5-14, they argue that teaching heads are likely to be much more conscious of the practical or logistical implications, and also much more up-to-date in their knowledge of the curriculum than are their non-teaching counterparts. This puts them in a strong position as 'curriculum leaders', in terms of how they are perceived by the rest of the staff, and may even help them introduce other types of innovation as well.

There is considerable evidence from the current research to support this view. Over two thirds (69%) of those participating in the survey indicated that they saw their role as being the 'team leader'. This implies sharing tasks (rather than delegating) and basing implementation strategies on personal experience within the

classroom. 'Case study' interviews indicate that this is a particularly strong element in many headteachers' approaches to implementing change. For example, one headteacher argued that he had a much more realistic knowledge of the demands which 5-14 has made on classroom teachers because 'I think when you're implementing [5-14] you have to know it', and that this has influenced his managerial approach.

Others were conscious that their own classroom practice could be used as models for the rest of the staff. This was varying referred to as: 'leading by example', 'demonstrating particular approaches' 'provide a good role model' and 'support staff in the classroom'. Taking this point one step further, 83% of respondents to the validation questionnaire agreed that a teaching headteacher's credibility is *based* on the example s/he sets in the classroom for other staff. Conversely, the lack of recent class teaching experience can put newly appointed headteachers from larger schools at a disadvantage. According to the headteacher at 'School 17', the biggest challenge he faced was returning to a teaching role, after spending some ten years as a non-teaching assistant headteacher in a much larger school.

6.2 Low numbers of staff

The size of small schools ranges from one teacher (i.e. the headteacher) to ten members of staff (including the headteacher and also peripatetic staff). As we saw (in Chapter 3), 62% of Heads are in one-, two- or three-teacher schools. For this group, low staff numbers lead to some obvious practical difficulties in implementing new initiatives. For example, the pool of expertise is more limited:

I think the difficulty in a small school is the fact that when you come to areas like expressive arts, you maybe find that you have three people and two of them are good at art and one's good at music, but what about the PE and the drama?
(School 15: 42 pupils + 10 PT nursery pupils)

While a common approach in larger schools is to delegate responsibilities to other members of the management team or establish working parties, this is more difficult in a school with few members of staff. Thus it is not surprising that headteachers in the survey placed 'delegation' relatively low on their list of strategies, while formal and informal consultation with staff is much more common (see Table 5.1).

As one small school headteacher put it: 'you don't have a management team'. There are simply not enough hands to divide up the task in this way, and this implies – in the absence of other strategies – that implementation will take longer.

Headteachers are also anxious not to overload staff, particularly when aspects of several new initiatives appear to need to be implemented simultaneously. One suggested that 'it is part of my job

to protect staff from the pace of change'. For this reason time management is very important in a small school: a key skill for a headteacher is to be able to prioritise. Similarly, there is a need to assess the demands made on staff, ensuring a balance between the introduction of change and recognition of the school's strengths.

However, there can be advantages as well as disadvantages in having low staff numbers – an example of the contextual 'trade off' discussed in Chapter 2. For example, where everyone is actively involved in planning and implementing all aspects of a new initiative, clearly there is likely to be greater awareness of the issues and greater commitment to decisions taken. As one headteacher explained: 'it took longer to development plan but it was easier to disseminate ...or work on it.'

All validation questionnaire respondents agreed that in a small school, it is essential for the headteacher and staff to discuss and agree strategies for implementing change together, and the majority (79%) described this as happening in their school. Their comments stressed the importance of this approach and recognised that it may be more significant – as well as easier to achieve – in a small school.

The active involvement of the headteacher, both as a planner and decision maker, on the one hand, and as implementer at classroom level, on the other, enhances the head's role as curriculum leader. This is likely to increase the effectiveness of implementation:

I aim to lead by example. By that I mean we talk informally about the type of things I do in my own classroom. ...Made staff meetings shorter on admin. and used the rest of it for discussion. I pass documents around, use lists to prioritise the agenda and spend the next half of the meeting on the development plan. We spend the time discussing how they are going to innovate or results of small scale evaluation of innovative methods tried out by staff. The sharing of classroom expertise is vitally important. (School 13: 59 pupils)

Another feature of low staff numbers is close relationships among members of staff, including the headteacher. 'Case study' headteachers were particularly eloquent on this point and described this as: 'I like to be open with people, discuss things'; 'you're a smaller closer knit community'; 'everybody is involved as far as possible'; and 'I think it's easier to communicate'. However, as another headteacher indicates, closeness may be a particular strength of small schools, but it also represents a danger. Others suggested that: 'one rogue individual could destroy the whole system'; 'if staff weren't cohesive, it would be horrific'; and 'a problem if there is a conflict of personalities'. Thus, close relationships are not automatically good relationships. Unless carefully nurtured, they can turn sour and destructive.

6.3 The range of tasks

A third feature of small schools which is likely to affect headteachers' management approach is the wide range of tasks with which they deal personally. This may range from development planning, at one end of the spectrum, to programming the school boiler or even unblocking drains, at the other. As we saw in the previous section, there is little scope for delegation so headteachers in small schools have to be particularly adept at prioritising and time management: for example, headteachers describe identifying aspects of initiatives in which they judge the school to be successful – and can therefore be taken as already achieved – and aspects which they judge to be unhelpful – which they ignore:

Time management is important...From the cluster group meetings, I found that we're ahead [in terms of 5-14] on language and maths. I want to be careful not to waste our time on doing unnecessary development work. (School 13: 59 pupils)

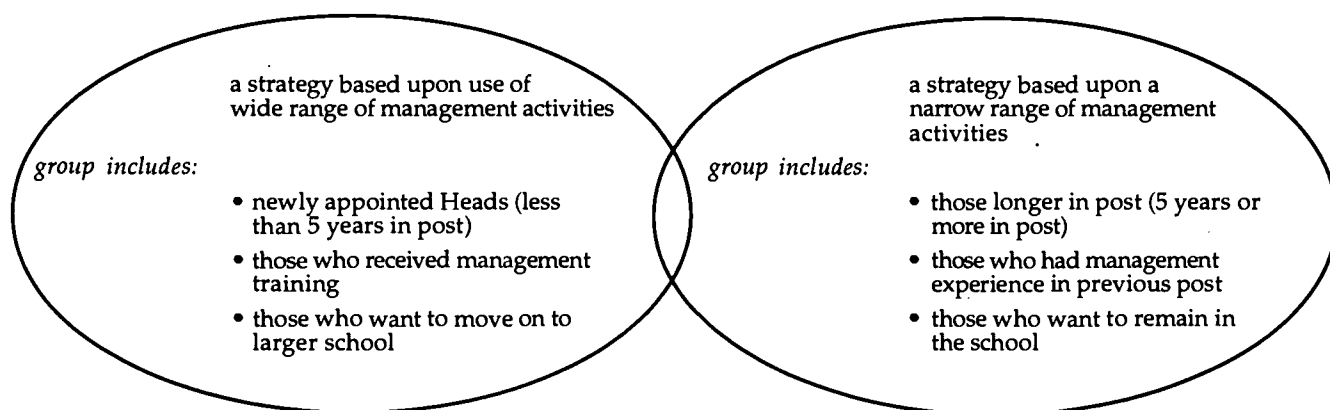
I don't think SDA is important for the school because of the [collaborative, close] way we work ... You have to prioritise. (School 9: 80 pupils)

In these circumstances, being able to draw on a wide repertoire of management activities is likely to be an advantage for a headteacher of a small school. Our evidence suggests that 'ambitious' headteachers are more likely than 'satisfied' headteachers to use a wide range of management activities. The characteristics of the two groups are summarised in Figure 6a below. (The data on which this account of 'ambitious' and 'satisfied' teachers is based is included in Appendix F: Tables V1:1 - V1:4.)

Figure 6a: Management strategies of 'ambitious' and 'satisfied' headteachers

'Ambitious' heads employ:

'Satisfied' heads employ:



The reasons for the differences seem clear. It is not surprising, for example, that those with management training are likely to have acquired a wider range of management approaches than those without it. Similarly we can understand that those seeking promotion want to be able to show they cope well with their current jobs. They may also

have sought management training as part of their preparation for applying for promotion. There may very well be a 'new broom' effect at work for those in their first management post: they may be keener to make changes and to try new approaches. As Table 6.1, below, shows, this group are more likely to agree that change is long overdue in schools, and that each change should be assessed on its merits.

Table 6.1: Views on change among Headteachers in their first posts and those with previous experience

	Change overdue (%)	Change as merited (%)	Excessive pace (%)	Pointless change (%)
in first headship	12	36	51	2
not in first headship	9	30	57	5

Conversely, it may be that those who have been in their current position for some time, and in particular those who have held other management posts before, feel that they know the activities which work best for them. If they also intend to stay on indefinitely (or until retirement) in their current posts, then the incentive to continue to try out new ways of managing may diminish. There is no evidence to suggest that 'satisfied' headteachers were less likely to have progressed with the implementation of the four major initiatives than 'ambitious' headteachers. (In fact, some of those who reported having implemented all four initiatives – the 'advanced' headteachers of Chapter 5 – had done so with the aid of a remarkably narrow range of management activities.) However, there is a danger that 'satisfied' headteachers have a higher risk of 'stagnation' and must, therefore, have access to continuing professional development opportunities.

6.4 Towards a small school management style

So far we have identified a range of management activities utilised by headteachers in our sample, we now turn to consider whether this constitutes a distinctive small schools' management style. Firstly, it seems clear that headteachers of small schools do not adopt an 'authoritative' style of Management based upon the 'positional power' of the headteacher to make decisions, delegate tasks and monitor performance. Evidence suggests that they see themselves as part of the 'team', work with others as professional colleagues, and lead from within the group, rather than directing from the outside. This is exemplified by one as:

My approach to management is discussing everything with the staff... I see myself as 'team leader': everybody has something to add and that includes not only the teachers here but the peripatetics, janitor and the auxiliary. (School 6: 18 pupils)

Such an approach has developed from the small school headteacher's experience of the demands of the classroom. They remain firmly anchored to their original professional group as teachers (cf. Bailey 1997) and are, therefore, more likely to derive their authority from their professional teaching expertise rather than their position in an organisational hierarchy. By working from within a small team, skilful headteachers in small schools ensure the active involvement of all and a greater degree of commitment to planned changes. At the same time, it has to be recognised that close relations among staff in small schools need to be carefully nurtured, and headteachers are particularly sensitive to this:

You have to have [a good working relationship] because you cannot be insular. You have to very much rely on the team. One of the things about a small school ... is you need everyone's help and support. (School 1: 58 pupils)

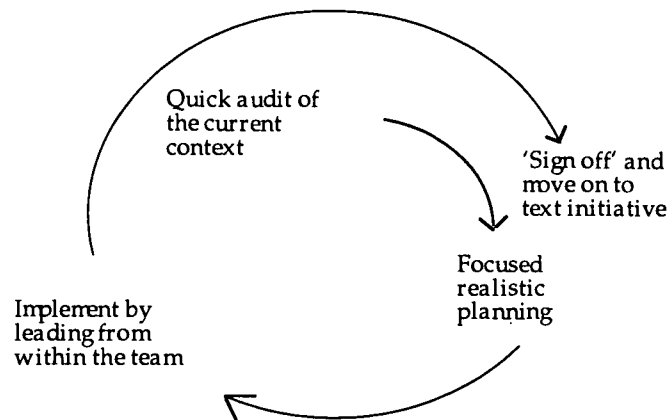
The particular skill of the small school headteacher lies in creating such a team, in which the head is simultaneously both leader and professional colleague, while continuously avoiding the potentially negative effects inherent in very close relationships. Additionally, limited time for management implies that headteachers of small schools must be able to cope personally with an extremely wide range of management demands (and other tasks) with limited time and resources.

This suggests that headteachers in small schools follow an implementation strategy which differs somewhat from the traditional 'plan – implement – review' cycle well-established in the management literature. Their approach may better be defined as:

- quick audit
- realistic planning for achievable targets
- implement with help from all available internal or external sources
- 'sign off' – move on.

Not only are the steps in the strategy more precisely defined, for pragmatic reasons, but, more significantly, each activity is 'signed off' as complete so that further parts of the initiative may be 'rolled out' (see Figure 6b). Small school headteachers literally do not have the time or resources continually to revisit a particular development once it has been put in place, and this may be why we find little discussion of monitoring or evaluating of changes once introduced.

Figure 6b: Implementation strategy of small school headteachers



Another important element in this strategy is the recognition among headteachers of small schools that in order to implement many of the changes, they need additional help. They have limited opportunities for delegation and are very conscious of the importance of not overburdening staff. Consequently, many demonstrate an 'outward looking' approach: they are keen networkers, particularly on an informal basis (informal discussion with other headteachers is the most popular management activity overall), although more formally constituted networks (such as clusters) are also seen as very effective. They are also avid users of advisory and educational development services, and are therefore very concerned about the effects of possible cuts in this area. (These points raised in Chapter 5, are explored in more detail in Chapter 7.)

The benefits of looking outwards are two fold: headteachers identify potential sources of help for the implementation of new initiatives, but also counter any tendency towards professional isolation, in a job where geographical isolation affects a substantial number (41%) of headteachers (see Chapter 3). 'Case study' heads were acutely aware of their need to be apprised of new ideas. Many had developed a range of ways for doing this – through networking, maintaining contacts with former colleagues, and attendance at courses which brought them into contact with others with similar professional interests.

However, this 'outward lookingness' for professional purposes is combined with a more cautious approach to relationships with the community served by the school. While recognising the importance of support from parents and the School Board, and expressing the desire that they become more actively involved in the life of the school, headteachers are also very aware of local sensitivities. They recognise the limitations of parental or community involvement: the feeling is that parents are unlikely to be interested in the details of running the

school, although they will provide practical help in a variety of ways. (See Chapter 7).

Is there, then, a small schools' 'management style'? We would suggest that the most appropriate term to describe it is *situational management* – a style based upon a realistic assessment of context, tasks and available resources. This demands a complex and sensitive array of skills derived from experience rather than position. Skilled small school headteachers appear:

- pragmatic
- able to prioritise
- to operate with focused plans
- to lead from within the team using their professional teaching expertise
- prepared to draw extensively on any additional resources available
- professionally outward looking
- environmentally conservative by demonstrating an awareness of community constraints
- willing to utilise all available resources.

6.5 Summary

In this chapter, we have examined ways in which the particular features of managing a small primary school – the duality of the role, the low numbers of staff with whom to share the work, and the wide range of tasks required of headteachers – shape small school headteachers' approach to management. The principal findings are summarised below.

- As *teaching headteachers*, management time is limited, and achieving a balance between teaching and managing can be difficult.
- Day to day experience of the classroom puts headteachers of small schools in a good position to implement changes by 'leading by example'.
- Such an approach is particularly valuable in view of the lower numbers of staff employed in small schools and the limited opportunities for delegation.
- Actively involving staff in the implementation of any major change has advantages, ensuring that everyone is well-informed and more likely to be committed.
- Small staff size tends to lead to close relationships: these require particular care when changes are planned.

- Small school headteachers must cope with a wide range of tasks. This is likely to be aided by a correspondingly wide repertoire of managerial skills.
- 'Ambitious' headteachers (those who are relatively new in post, with management training and seeking promotion) are more likely than 'satisfied' headteachers (those who have been in post for more than 5 years, do not have management training, and intend to remain in their current posts) to make use of a wide range of management activities.
- Skilled small school headteachers' have developed a *situational management* approach based upon pragmatism, prioritising, leading from within the team, being professionally outward looking but environmentally cautious.

How is this distinctive management style, which small school headteachers have developed, supported and developed? We consider these issues in the next two chapters. Firstly, in Chapter 7, we look at ways in which Education Authorities and national bodies provide support and professional development for headteachers working in small schools; and then in Chapter 8, consider what more may need to be done.

7: Available support and development

7.1 Supporting headteachers in small schools

In this chapter we look at the range of available support structures and development activities which help headteachers of small schools manage change. These include:

- Education Authority-based support
- National provision for support and development; and finally
- Support from within the communities in which small schools are sited.

7.2 Education Authority-based support

The nature and scope of support for small schools varies across Education Authorities. Those with either large numbers of small schools or a high proportion of small schools clearly have more reason to cater specifically for the needs of small schools. However, a range of approaches exists, and it is worth noting that Education Authorities with relatively low numbers of small schools have, in some cases, made special provision. For example (former) Lothian Region produced a training pack for headteachers of small schools.

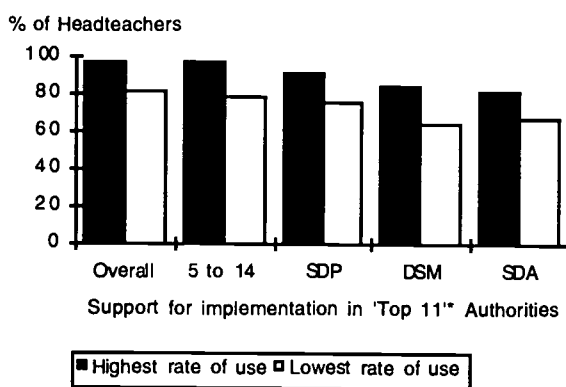
In this section we focus mainly on the 'top 11' Education Authorities, viz. those which have the highest numbers of small schools in absolute terms or as a proportion of their total number of schools. (As previously discussed in Chapter 5, the ten Authorities with the highest number of small schools in absolute terms are Highland, Aberdeenshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Argyll and Bute, Perthshire and Kinross, Scottish Borders, Angus, Fife, the Western Isles, and Shetland. The list of those with the highest number in proportion to the total within the Authority is virtually unchanged, with the exception of Fife, whose 33 small schools make up 23% of the total number of schools in the Authority, and the inclusion instead of Orkney, whose 14 small schools make up 56% of the total number in the Authority. [See Table 3.3.] These 11 Authorities therefore form the 'top 11'.) Support includes:

- Educational Advisory Services
- support networks (such as clusters and headteachers' networks; and also
- within schools support (such as secretaries and peripatetic teachers, etc.) which are determined, at least in part, by Education Authority policy.

Professional support and development

The main message is that headteachers of small schools in the 'top 11' Education Authorities make extensive use of their Educational Advisory Services. In three Education Authorities, 97% of respondents reported utilising them to implement at least one of the major initiatives. However, while advisers clearly had a key role to play in the implementation of 5-14 (range of use varies from 97% to 79%) and School Development Planning (range from 92% to 76%), their use appears to have been more limited in relation to Devolved School Management (range from 84% to 65% in the six Education Authorities where, according to the survey, all or most schools have implemented DSM – C, D, H, I, J and K) and Staff Development and Appraisal (range from 82% to 67% in the four Education Authorities which had substantial experience of implementing SDA – D, E, H and K.) Figure 7a below shows the range of use for the four initiatives.

Figure 7a: Highest and lowest reported use of Advisory Services to implement the four initiatives



*Note that the range shown for DSM relates to 6 Education Authorities: C, D, H, I, J and K. The range for SDA relates to 4 Education Authorities: D, E, H and K.)

The interview data reveal that headteachers very much appreciate the support which advisers provide. However, they are concerned that such support may not be so readily available as a consequence of Local Government Reorganisation and changes in advisers' remits. Other types of Education Authority-based professional support are available to schools: for example, Educational Psychologists, Learning Support teachers and other specialists. However, their role was rarely discussed in interviews. However, in one case, provision of an auxiliary for a pupil with Downs Syndrome offered a welcome element of flexibility in a two-teacher school.

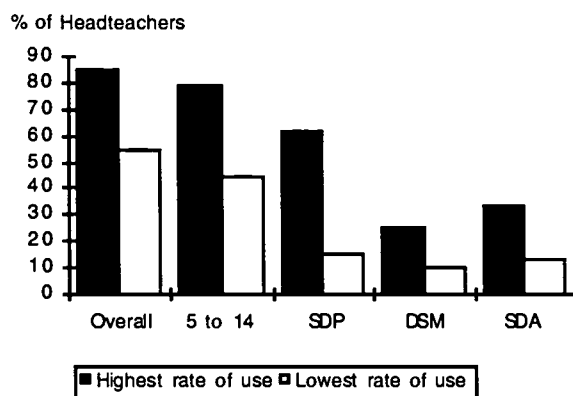
Clusters

Clusters, sometimes referred to as co-operatives or associated school groups, are organised groups of schools, usually consisting of a secondary school and its associated primary schools. In some cases,

especially in rural areas, several clusters feed into the same secondary school. One of the original aims was to facilitate primary-secondary transfer, particularly in the context of 5-14, and this may explain why clusters tend to be associated with curriculum development activities. However once formed, they have developed in disparate ways.

The use of clusters and other networking structures was widespread in most of the 'top 11' Education Authorities. (range from 85% to 55%). However, the pattern of use varied across Authorities and initiatives. Use of development groups is popular for 5-14 (ranging from 79% to 45% reported use) and School Development Planning (from 62% to 15%). However, it is relatively unpopular for either Devolved School Management (range from 25% to 10%) or Staff Development and Appraisal (range is between 33% and 13%). The picture is shown in figure 7b below.

Figure 7b: Highest and lowest reported use of external development groups to implement the four initiatives



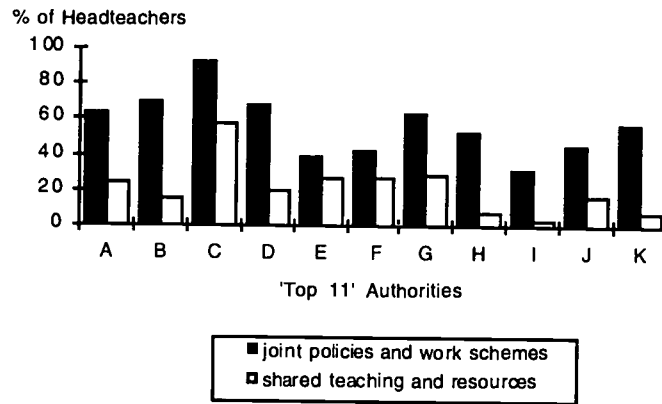
*Note that the range shown for DSM relates to 6 Education Authorities: C, D, H, I, J and K. The range for SDA relates to 4 Education Authorities: D, E, H and K.

Three types of clusters were identified. These include those which:

- develop informal school links
- devise joint policies and schemes of work; and
- share teachers and resources.

The main findings indicate that the vast majority of headteachers (91%) had used clusters as an informal link; 61% were operating joint policies and schemes; and only 25% shared teachers and resources. Figure 7c shows the extent to which the 'top 11' Education Authorities have used clusters to develop joint policies and schemes of work, and/or of sharing teaching and resources.

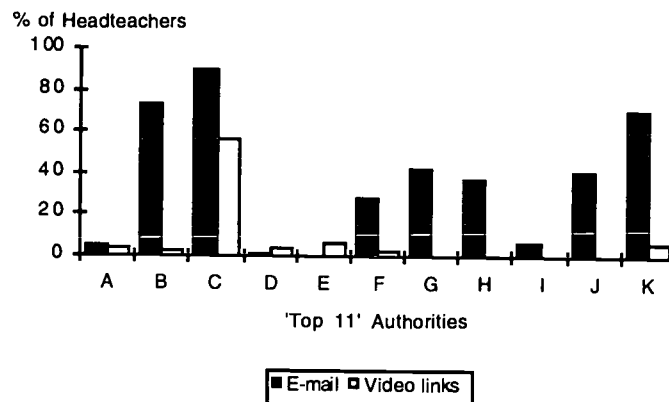
Figure 7c: Use of clustering at the levels of joint policies and schemes of work, and of shared teaching and resources



There is considerable regional variation: 92% to 32% engage in joint policy development; while 58% to 3% share teachers and resources. The level of commitment in some Education Authorities has clearly been very high but this has resource implications. It is certainly the case that where Education Authorities have not been able to find funding, clusters have withered. As one headteacher recalled: 'the cluster group has not met for two years. There is no money available'. (School 13: 59 pupils)

There is some evidence to suggest that where Education Authorities have established electronic networks these support clustering. The two Education Authorities (B and C) in which headteachers report the greatest use of electronic mail are also ahead in using clusters at the level of operating joint policies and schemes of work. This is illustrated by Figure 7d.

Figure 7d: Use of e-mail and video links to support implementation of new initiatives across 11 Education Authorities



Several factors appear to be associated with the use of cluster for management activities. Headteachers must perceive them to be beneficial. They must be neither 'too big' nor too small (although what constitutes a perfect size varies). Headteachers are divided as to

whether separate clusters should be created for small schools. Clearly, they object to clusters which are dominated by either larger schools or abrasive personalities. As one headteacher put it: 'part of the success is that the members of the ASG group gel so well as a group' (School 10: 21 pupils). Additionally, achieving a balance between the demands of the cluster and the needs of individual schools is important. Some 'are happy to share work which saves schools trawling through policy documents'; but they also wish to retain their individual school development plans. On balance the benefits are perceived to outweigh any deleterious effects.

Headteachers' networks

Headteachers' networks have been set up in some Education Authorities to explore common issues and provide support. How they link with the cluster system is not – from the interview data – very clear. In some cases, the headteachers' network appears to be a subgroup of the cluster. In other cases, the network appears to be a separate group, with a rather different brief from the clusters. For example, one of the island 'case study' headteachers explained that there was an annual meeting of all the headteachers on the island with Education Authority representatives. At the last meeting, the group had discussed DSM policy, staff development and the need for a resource centre on the island. More often the networks operate at an informal level between like-minded colleagues in which they draw on each other's advice and expertise as appropriate.

Training

More than any other initiative, Devolved School Management has required headteachers to develop a range of managerial skills which they would not necessarily have acquired in their teaching careers. As one headteacher explained 'a major difficulty would be getting someone to look after the finances' (School 8:11 pupils). But another who had been involved with DSM for two years reflected that although 'initially obviously it's a big change for everyone, ...I probably am not finding it as difficult'. Part of this change in attitude may be explained by the level of support and training offered by Education Authorities. In interview, most of the 'case study' headteachers whose schools were involved in Devolved School Management said that they had received training. However, the quality – and, quite crucially – the timing of this training varied considerably. For some headteachers, the training had been excellent, not least because their perception now was that the task was manageable and allowed them to take decisions about spending.

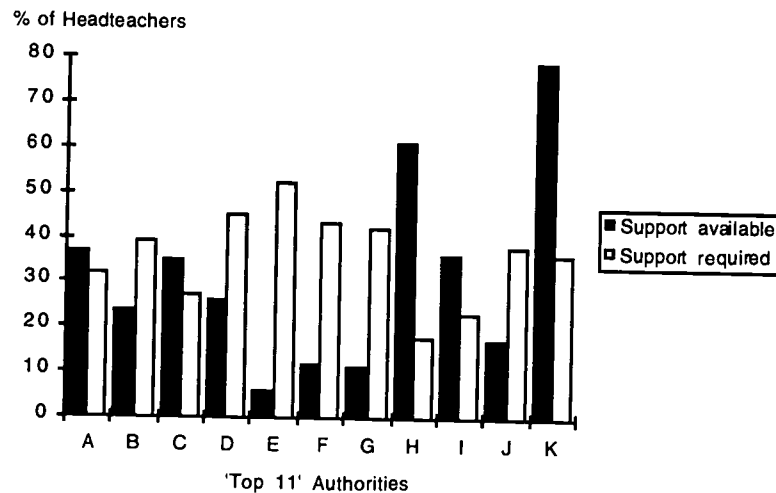
The secretary and I went for the training, which was good. ... I couldn't have done it without it. (School 4: 118 pupils)

But several others complained that the training had been carried out some time before the system was introduced. They had therefore forgotten what was supposed to be done and, in some cases, become *resentful*. A crucial indicator of success appears to be ongoing support rather than 'one-off' training sessions.

Clerical support

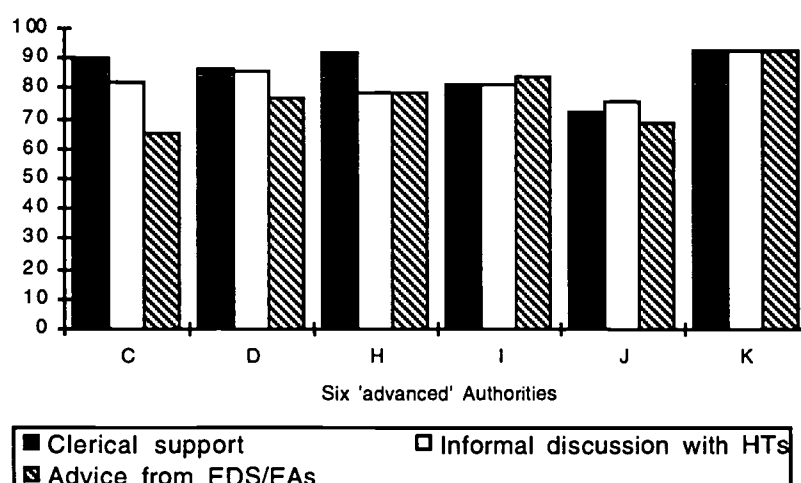
Adequate clerical support is of great importance to small school headteachers, not least in terms of covering office duties while the head is teaching. Almost a third (29%) of respondents indicated that they had received additional clerical support to help them with their work, but just over a third (38%) would like additional clerical support. However, the extent to which such support is available varies widely from one Education Authority to another, as Figure 7e indicates:

Figure 7e: Clerical support available and required in 'top 11' Education Authorities



The extent to which additional support has been made available ranges from 71% in Authority K to 6% in Authority E. It is not surprising that patterns of availability of additional clerical support correlate with patterns of implementation of Devolved School Management. (See Section 5.1 which describes patterns of implementation across Education Authorities). In four of the six Education Authorities furthest ahead with this initiative, it is the most widely used management activity for DSM as is shown in Figure 7f below:

Figure 7f: Most frequently used management activities for implementation of DSM in six 'advanced' Education Authorities



The level of importance placed on clerical support in this instance is particularly significant. With other initiatives, as we have seen (in Chapter 5), informal discussions with other headteachers was the most commonly used management approach but headteachers made clear the extent to which they rely on well-trained and efficient clerical staff for the implementation of DSM.

Senior teachers

Headteachers had little to say about the role of other promoted members of staff and this is undoubtedly a reflection on their relative paucity in small schools. Although not officially a management role, senior teacher can be a source of support in small schools. One of the heads indicated that the senior teacher operated as 'a role model and mentor' in a way similar to the 'curriculum leader' role, which we have already seen (Section 5.6 characterises headship in small schools.)

Peripatetic staff

Peripatetic teachers may be an important source of new ideas for small schools. Headteachers of small schools seem to have drawn on the skills and expertise of peripatetic teachers for staff development and management purposes. They were described by various headteachers as: 'a role model, mentor for the rest of the school'; having 'injected a huge amount into the school' and 'being lucky in that I got someone [peripatetic] who is willing to take over'. However, a note of caution was raised by one head who explained that occasionally 'it can be difficult asking all the visiting teachers to plan in a way that I want planning within this school' (School 14:21 pupils) and in accordance with her particular philosophy for the school. Additionally, 'case study' data suggests that provision of peripatetic staff is uneven.

7.3 National provision for support and development

At national level, management support for headteachers in both large and small schools comes from a number of sources. These include:

- Scottish Office documentation
- national training courses
- advice and support materials prepared by the Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum (SCCC), and specific national implementation committees; and in addition
- Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) primarily through their feedback from the school inspection process.

In this section we look at ways in which headteachers in small schools utilise these resources.

Documentation

The principal form of support for the four main initiatives at national level is the various SOEID policies, outlines and guidelines. It is not surprising that reading and analysing these comes high on the list of activities reported by small school headteachers (90% of respondents reported that they had used this in relation to at least one initiative, placing it second to informal discussions with other headteachers as the most popular approach). There is little variation over the four initiatives. The overall figures for 5-14 and School Development Planning show that the majority of headteachers had made use of the documentation in each case (88% and 77% respectively.) In relation to Devolved School Management and Staff Development and Appraisal, figures are almost as high in the Education Authorities where implementation of these initiatives is well ahead. For DSM, the range is 86% in one Education Authority to 68% in another. For SDA it is 76% to 36% in another. (This figure - 36% - seems surprisingly low for an Authority where SDA has been fully or partly implemented in every school. There is no other evidence available to explain this, particularly as headteachers in this Authority made ample use of documentation in relation to the other initiatives. There may have been a particular approach to SDA in this Authority - for example training sessions for all headteachers - which reduced the need to study the documentation in detail, but we do not have any further information.)

Headteachers in small schools had two principal concerns regarding national documentation: firstly, how to manage the information flow to their staff, given the volume of paperwork emanating from the Scottish Office; and secondly, whether sufficient account had been taken of small schools in the planning assumptions which underpin each initiative. Heads describe: 'dipping into' documents; 'getting their noses into the documents'; 'using staff

meeting to discuss them'; 'using lists to prioritise'; conducting 'mini-audits'; but also 'protecting staff from the pace of change'. Criticism was reserved principally for the 5-14 Environmental Studies document. Headteachers felt it was unwieldy for a number of reasons – one called it 'a tomb of a document' – and it was suggested that it caused particular problems for small schools because it was 'very time consuming' and 'such a broad area'.

National training and development

The little data we have on headteachers' views on national training relates to the SOEID management modules: it is largely favourable especially of *Monitoring School Effectiveness* and *Staff Development and Appraisal*. However, the question of whether these modules were relevant to small schools 'particularly [Principles of Management] the way it dealt with management of staff' was also raised. National support for the implementation of new initiatives can also come through HMI. However, the survey suggests that headteachers in small schools tended not to draw directly on their advice: in fact only 38% of respondents had used their advice in relation to at least one of the four initiatives. There is similarly very little discussion of the role of SCCC, or of colleges of education.

Although there is a clear demand for support and development to be tailored to the needs of small schools, it is harder to identify the specific areas in which changes need to be made. It may be that much material – and many trainers – simply fail to demonstrate a situational understanding of small schools, and that this is felt to be unhelpful. Alternatively, the managerial concepts upon which much management training is predicated may simply be inappropriate.

7.4 Support from the community

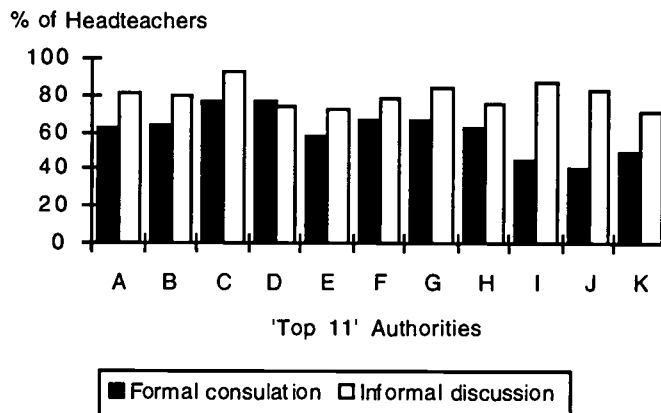
The extent to which headteachers of small schools draw on community support for the management of change appears to depend very largely on the headteacher's attitudes towards community relations. Certainly, this is how the headteachers themselves view the situation. We have seen in an earlier section (4.1) that headteachers of small schools are less likely than they may have been in the past to live in the community served by the school. This reflects both a decline in the provision of 'school houses' and headteachers' own desire for privacy and the opportunity to 'leave the job behind' for at least a small part of each day. Some indicated that they needed to encourage parents to 'keep their distance' rather than aim to increase involvement. And one headteacher 'found it quite difficult that parents would phone me up to say, "So-and-so has forgotten his homework"'. The need to achieve a balance between parental

involvement and interference may mean that it is harder for headteachers to build community relationships.

A role for parents?

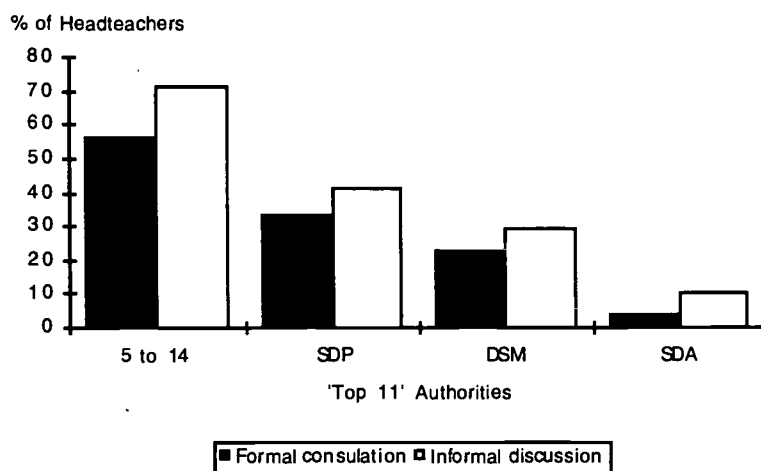
From the survey, it emerges that headteachers of small schools are more likely to discuss management matters with parents on an informal basis than to consult formally: most headteachers (80%) had used informal discussion with parents in the course of implementing new initiatives at least once; approximately two thirds (67%) had used formal consultation on at least one occasion. There is a degree of regional variation in this which may be explained by Education Authority 'custom and practice'. As can be seen from Figure 7g below: the use of informal discussion ranges from 93% of Education Authority C headteachers to 71% of Education Authority K headteachers; and the use of formal consultation ranges from 77% of headteachers from Education Authorities C and D to 41% of headteachers in Education Authority J.

Figure 7g: Use of formal and informal parental consultation across 'top 11' Education Authorities



It is also clear from our survey evidence that headteachers sought parental views more readily on curriculum matters than on Devolved School Management or Staff Development and Appraisal, as can be seen in Figure 7h.

Figure 7h: Use of formal and informal consultation with parents in relation to the four major initiatives



It is not surprising that consultation with parents on Staff Development and Appraisal is low, as it may well be felt that certain issues are too sensitive to be widely known and discussed in a small community. As one headteacher commented:

I am aware of the need to be careful ... because the least little thing and tongues will be wagging. You can't afford that. (School 8: 11 pupils)

However, the relatively low percentage of headteachers who consult parents about DSM is more unexpected, particularly as the evidence from the 'case study' interviews is that parents are more likely to be concerned with practical issues, including major purchases, than they are about curriculum matters. They may also possess some of the professional financial expertise which some headteachers lack. A number of headteachers described their parents as 'very active', 'supportive', 'willing to roll their sleeves up', 'serve on stalls' and 'do the dishes' and 'helping out' in practical ways but very unwilling to 'come on to committees'.

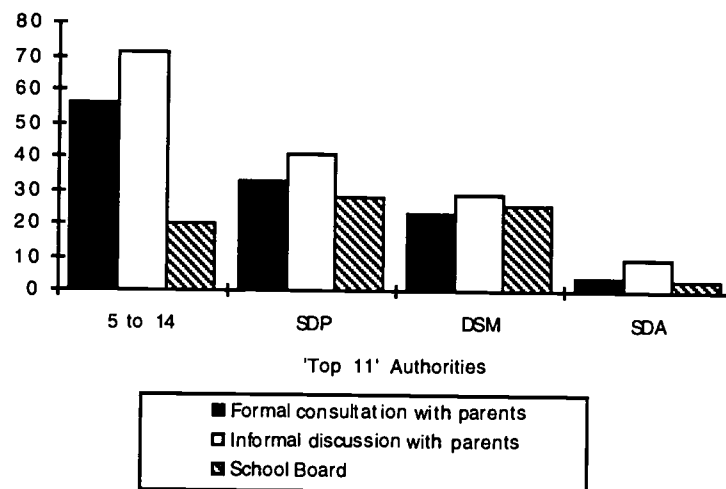
School Boards

Given their apparent ambivalence to parental involvement indicated above, it is not surprising that consulting School Board is one of the least used management activities adopted by headteachers in small schools. Less than half (42%) indicated that they had done so in relation to at least one of the major initiatives. (The low figure, of course, also reflects the fact that not all schools have School Boards.) There is a degree of regional variation in the use of School Boards. As figure 7i, below, demonstrates, headteachers in some Education Authorities appear to be considerably more likely to make use of the School Board than in others. Use ranges from 58% of Education Authority C headteachers to 21% of Education Authority G headteachers.

Fig

There are also differences in the way advice from the School Board is drawn on in relation to the four major initiatives, as can be seen from Figure 7j below.

Figure 7j: Use of advice from School Board, compared with parental consultation, in the implementation of the four major initiatives



Headteachers are very much less likely to have drawn on advice from the School Board in relation to 5-14 than for SDP and DSM. Some of the differences may result from different legislative arrangements; others from 'custom or practice' developed by headteachers and their School Boards.

As with parental consultation, headteachers of small schools did not expect the School Board to take an active interest in the management of the curriculum and one, typical of many, reported: 'I don't think they [School Board] really want to direct the curriculum.' (School 3:57) School Boards appear to take an approach which one headteacher summed up as 'single issues' rather on-going management. This view is supported by other research findings (e.g.

Raab *et al.* 1997). Several headteachers cite activities, such as seatbelts on buses, toilets, fire prevention and individual cases of bullying.

Interviews with School Board members tend to confirm headteachers' perspectives. They appear confident about their ability to deal with practical matters, such as bus timetables or proposed school closure but very unwilling to criticise headteachers and their staff. As the chair of one School Board recalled: '...there has never been a time [with DSM] when anybody has said "No. Wait a minute. This is out of order"' (School 12:77 pupils). Part of the explanation may be as another chair explained; 'We have busy professional lives ourselves' (Chair, School 6:18 pupils). Some headteachers felt that a School Board is not an appropriate mechanism for a small school because of the small number of parents on which they can draw (in that case 15 families who could be contacted directly).

7.5 Summary

We have identified the support and development opportunities utilised by headteachers of small schools. The main points arising from this chapter are summarised below.

- The most frequently used management activity is informal discussion with other headteachers.
- Other sources of support for headteachers of small schools are their Education Authorities, SOEID documentation, HMI, and the communities which their schools serve.
- Support from Education Authorities can be targeted specifically to the needs of small schools, particularly in Education Authorities where there are substantial numbers of small schools.
- Most Education Authorities with small schools use similar types of support – for example, advisory services, clustering, networking, training and extra clerical support for DSM.
- There are variations in the distribution of support across Education Authorities
- Most headteachers feel that skilled clerical support is essential to the successful implementation of DSM.
- Successful clustering can make a considerable difference to a headteachers' ability to cope with major changes.
- Support at national level, while also valuable, is not perceived to have taken the particular needs of small schools fully into account, and this may be an issue to which attention should be drawn.
- Finally, schools draw considerable support from parents and other members of their communities, both formally and informally. However, this support tends to be practical rather than related to either the curriculum or management.

8: A way forward?

In this chapter, the principal findings from the study are brought together to answer our research questions; and the report concludes with recommendations for headteachers, Educational Authorities and national bodies to support the further development of managerial skills among headteachers in small schools.

8.1 The principal research findings

8.1.1 Small primary schools

Question: What is the profile of small primary schools in Scotland?

- There were 863 primary schools in Scotland in 1996 with fewer than 121 pupils of which 63% have fewer than 60 pupils and 37% have between 60 and 120 pupils.
- Headteachers perceive rolls to be stable in approximately half (51%) of the small schools, on the increase in 28% and in decline in 20%. Heads of very small schools (i.e. those with fewer than 60 pupils) are more likely to report declining rolls than larger schools.
- The number of teachers employed in small schools ranges from 1 to 10 (including the headteacher). The majority (62%) have 3 teachers or fewer. One-teacher schools make up 10% of all small schools.
- Most small schools are to be found in rural or island locations (89%). Education Authorities with the largest number of small schools are Highland, Aberdeenshire, Dumfries & Galloway and Argyll & Bute; but Shetland, Argyll & Bute and the Western Isles have the highest percentages of small schools.
- A substantial proportion of small schools (41%) are to be found in geographically isolated locations. The smallest schools (i.e. those with a roll of under 60 pupils) are more likely to be geographically isolated than those with a roll of 60 to 120 pupils. *Feeling* geographically isolated does not necessarily correspond to remote location.

8.1.2 Headteachers of small schools

Question: Who are the small school headteachers and what characteristics do they share?

- Proportionately more headteachers of small schools, and particularly of very small schools (under 60 pupils) are female compared with the national average.

- Most headteachers of small schools are aged between 35 and 50.
- The majority hold a Diploma in Education from a Scottish College of Education, although early career histories are very varied.
- Just under a half of headteachers of small schools originate in rural areas; and approximately a third were educated in small primary schools. It is, however, now relatively unusual for headteachers of small schools to live within the catchment areas of their schools. This appears to reflect – at least in part – a desire for privacy.
- Relatively few headteachers of small schools have held management posts prior to their appointment. Of the total number, just under half had been in post for five years or less, 12% for less than one year and 10% over 16 years.
- Most headteachers in small schools have received some form of management training, but this tends to take place some time after their appointment. The majority (two thirds) feel that management training should be adapted to meet the needs of headteachers in small schools.
- Many headteachers (just under half) hope to remain in their current posts indefinitely. Approximately a quarter are considering promotion, either to a larger school or elsewhere in education. Many headteachers enjoy their work and are happy in their current schools. Some, however, report difficulties in balancing the teaching and management elements of the job, and those who feel stressed are more likely to want to leave their current posts.

8.1.3 Managing change

Question: How have small school headteachers implemented the four major educational initiatives?

- Virtually all schools have either fully or partially implemented 5-14 and SDP. Implementation of the two more recently introduced initiatives, DSM and SDA, lags behind the other two.
- There is considerable variation in rates of implementation of DSM and SDA across Education Authorities, partly as a result of different policy approaches. In some Education Authorities, implementation of DSM in small schools has been delayed; and in others, SDA has been frozen pending the relaunch of the initiative in January 1998.
- There is little evidence to suggest that headteachers of small schools are resistant to change, although half of the respondents (51%) felt that the pace of change had been too swift.
- Those still in the process of implementing the various initiatives are more likely to perceive the pace of curricular and management change to be very rapid and to feel more stressed than those who have fully or virtually fully implemented the four.

- Headteachers made use of a range of management activities to implement the four initiatives. Overall, the most widely used activities include informal consultation with other headteachers, seeking advice from educational advisers and development officers, and studying the relevant documents associated with the new initiatives.
- There are, however, variations in the types of activity most frequently associated with each initiative. For example, the use of 'development groups' (clusters or other types of network) is closely linked to the implementation of 5-14; while making use of clerical support is paramount for DSM.
- Headteachers who have fully or virtually fully implemented all four initiatives are likely to be dynamic, positive-thinking people with a tendency to formalise management activities.

8.1.4 Management approaches in a small school setting

Question: Is there a small school management style?

- As *teaching headteachers*, management time is limited, and achieving a balance between teaching and managing can be difficult.
- Day to day experience of the classroom puts headteachers of small schools in a good position to implement changes by *leading by example*.
- Such an approach is particularly valuable in view of the lower numbers of staff employed in small schools and the limited opportunities for delegation.
- Actively involving staff in the implementation of any major change has advantages, ensuring that everyone is well-informed and more likely to be committed.
- Small staff size tends to lead to close relationships: these require particular care when changes are planned.
- Small school headteachers must cope with a wide range of tasks. This is likely to be aided by a correspondingly wide repertoire of managerial skills.
- 'Ambitious' headteachers (those who are relatively new in post, have management training and are seeking promotion) are more likely than 'satisfied' headteachers (those who have been in post for more than 5 years, do not have management training, and intend to remain in their current posts) to make use of a wide range of management activities

- Skilled small school headteachers' have developed a *situational management* approach based upon pragmatism, prioritising, leading from within the team, being professionally outward looking but environmentally cautious.

How is this distinctive management style developed, supported and further developed? We considered these issues in Chapter 7.

8.1.5 Support for managing change in small schools

Question: What support and development opportunities are available to small school headteachers?

- The most frequently used management activity is *informal discussion with other headteachers*.
- Other sources of support for headteachers of small schools are their Education Authorities, SOEID documentation and HMI, and the communities which their schools serve.
- Support from Education Authorities can be targeted specifically to the needs of small schools, particularly in Education Authorities where there are substantial numbers of small schools.
- Most Education Authorities with small schools use similar types of support – for example, advisory services, clustering, networking, training and extra clerical support for DSM.
- There are variations in the distribution of support across Education Authorities.
- Most headteachers feel that skilled clerical support is essential for the successful implementation of DSM.
- Successful clustering can make a considerable difference to a headteachers' ability to cope with major changes.
- Support at national level, while also valuable, is not perceived to have taken the particular needs of small schools fully into account.
- Finally, schools draw considerable support from parents and other members of their communities, both formally and informally. However, this support tends to be practical rather than related to either the curriculum or management.

8.2 Recommendations

To support and development further small school headteachers' managerial skills, we recommend that action should be taken at national, Education Authority and school levels.

8.2.1 For headteachers

- ensure that they continually review the range of management activities which they regularly utilise
- extend their networking skills by joining informal networks and formal school 'clusters'
- develop their information and communications technology skills.

But we must also recognise that headteachers' own efforts to extend their skills and knowledge are linked inextricably to available resources and support from both local and national sources is required.

8.2.2 Support and development at local level

At local level it is important to ensure that Education Authorities take cognisance of the particular needs of small schools. Proposals for action by Education Authorities include:

- ensure that job descriptions for small school headships accurately reflect the full range of professional skills and knowledge required to manage effectively
- inform Appointment Committees for the appointment of new headteachers, as constituted under the School Board Scotland Act, 1988, of the possible connection between the breadth of the candidate's experiences and their ability to manage a small school
- provide timeous induction training for all newly appointed headteachers in small schools and, if this cannot be organised efficiently because of low numbers, ensure that a member of the Educational Advisory Service visits all newly appointed headteacher within the first week in post
- design staff development opportunities to take account of the specific needs of headteachers in small schools. This should include examples of planning for variable composite classes
- ensure that those headteachers, who do not wish to spend the rest of their careers in small schools, are offered opportunities to extend their management skills and knowledge for example by attendance at national courses, visits or exchanges
- institute what we refer to as a rust-prevention programme for those headteachers (44% of the sample) who wish to spend the rest of their careers in small schools to overcome any tendency towards 'stagnation' or isolation. The Teacher Placement Service may be one strand of a multi-track programme whereby additional experiences could be provided for those in remote locations

- ensure that advisers and development officers are drawn from a range of different backgrounds within the education service. These should include staff with experience of managing small schools. Secondment of effective headteachers of small schools to the EDS should be actively explored
- use formal Staff Development and Appraisal programmes to offer targeted support to headteachers in small schools and keep their particular needs under review
- create formal 'clusters' in Education Authorities wherever these do not exist and provide funding for cluster co-ordination
- recognise the stress inherent in the duality of the role of headteacher of a small school and develop a time-out system for headteachers who are in particularly stressful situations e.g. one-teacher schools or those with probationary teachers.

Professional development opportunities for small school headteachers need to be accessible. This may mean that Education Authorities should:

- think creatively about minimising time lost through travel by designing events to suit local circumstances. These may include focusing developments on existing clusters or 'buying in' to local staff developments opportunities outwith the education service
- explore the use of new technology for the delivery of staff development and the creation of an authority-wide intra-net

8.2.3 Support and development at national level

Many of our respondents perceived that there was little recognition at national level of their particular circumstances or of the support and professional development headteachers of small schools need to help them manage change. A number of 'case study' headteachers expressed their frustration at having to work out by themselves, or with limited support, how to adapt an initiative to their own circumstances. Exemplars based upon stable composite classes, which ignore the reality of many small schools or lack of time for writing detailed planning documents were particularly irritating. With this in mind, we suggest that national bodies should:

- include a representative from a small school on all committees planning national development initiatives to ensure that planning assumptions take account of the specific needs, and ways of managing, prevalent in small schools
- plan each initiative to include an extended timescale for small schools thus building in at the inception of each an awareness of the difficulties headteachers in small school experience in meeting nationally imposed deadlines

- second a headteacher from a small school to the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department's Audit Unit to develop, and 'ground' the next national initiative – Target Setting – into a small school setting
- ensure that national documents relating to school management are written in a 'user-friendly' way, eschewing the 'management-speak' which small school headteachers find off-putting. Given that small school headteachers tend to see themselves as leading from within a group of professional colleagues, and use the language of the teaching profession to which they belong, documents should be written in a way which is not perceived to be 'deskilling' but reinforces their existing professional knowledge and values.
- design materials to support the implementation of new initiatives which takes account of the particular circumstances of small schools and use two- or three-teacher school as exemplars (see Chapter 3.1)
- develop, particularly the SCCC, Higher Education Institutes and the Scottish Centre for the Study of School Administration, case study materials based upon small schools which reflects the wide range of management experiences to be found across small schools
- support the creation of a Scottish centre of excellence for small schools. This may be conceived as an actual centre based in a HEI which could provide in-service teacher education geared to the needs of small schools, or more realistically, part of a Virtual Teachers' Centre. Bids could be made to the Lottery Fund to develop a range of appropriate continuing professional development activities.
- ensure that the qualification for headteachers, currently being developed by The Scottish Office, is not based exclusively upon assumptions appropriate to managing larger establishments. Modules should be developed which recognise the effects of scale and context on management style.
- shift the emphasis of national seminars on new initiatives to an 'action oriented' model which allows headteachers to undertake some of the initial planning for the transference of information to their particular contexts. This would capitalise on the small school headteachers' preferences for networking and action.
- establish a Scottish Small School Network which could link with a European network to form the basis for both teacher and pupil contact and exchanges. Contact could be maintained by 'virtual conferencing' and/or focused local network meetings.

8.3 Conclusions

Successful management of change requires managers who can undertake a realistic appraisal of their current situation; develop a shared vision of the future, and plan the first few practical steps. For many headteachers working in small schools this is implicitly understood. Our respondents articulated a vision of the future firmly based on benefits for the children and communities which they serve, and achieved through their efforts as curriculum leaders. They neither perceived, nor referred to themselves, as educational managers, but pragmatically managed their schools by continuing to develop as teachers on to which they bolted a set of specific management activities to meet the particular circumstances in which they operated. This we have identified as *situational school management* (see Figure 8a below)

Figure 8a: Situated school management – a model for small schools

Development of professional teaching competences		Integration of teaching and management		Development of management skills
expert practitioner	→	Teaching Competences		curriculum leader
proficient practitioner (increased breadth of teaching experiences)	→			leading by example
competent practitioner (experienced class teacher)	→			managing self and children's learning
experienced beginner (full registration)	→	Novice		managing self and children's learning
novice practitioner (first appointment)	→	Probationer		managing self and learning to manage children's learning

Clearly, the needs of small school headteachers are two-fold: continually to up-date their professional teaching expertise, while at the same time absorbing sufficient, appropriate managerial skills to enable them to operate effectively within their own particular environments. Successful management of small schools requires an ability to 'juggle' a wide range of competing priorities. There is some evidence from this project that headteachers of small schools are a 'self-selecting group' – the members of which have matched their previous, diverse experiences against the specific requirements for the post. This undoubtedly contributes to their current effectiveness but also gives rise to very specific development needs.

Additionally, we see that the language of school management has changed nationally. The debate now includes references to efficiency, effectiveness, performance indicators, development planning, devolved budgets, targets and partnerships – all of which need adapting for small schools. It is in no one's interest that the particular circumstances faced by the small school headteacher are not included in this debate. Being a *teaching headteacher* is a complex activity. But as this research demonstrates, those who work in small schools have no difficulty identifying the essential elements of their style, or what is required to maintain it effectively. We should listen to their voices.

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Appendix A: Summary of main legislation and guidelines affecting Scottish headteachers' management role (1980-1996)

Acts, Statutory Instruments or Guidelines	Management implications
Education (Scotland) Act 1980	Requires that Gaelic must be taught in Gaelic speaking areas and religious instruction will normally also be provided.
School Board Scotland Act 1988	Requires headteachers to consult with School Boards where these exist. Grants to School Boards the right to information and to participate in certain management activities, eg appointment of staff.
Self-Governing Schools etc. (Scotland) Act, 1989	Grants, <i>inter alia</i> , the Secretary of State the powers to require education authorities to appraise the performance of teaching staff.
Circular 3/1991	Invited education authorities to prepare schemes for staff development and appraisal. To be implemented in all schools by the school session 1995/96.
Curriculum & Assessment in Scotland, National Guidelines 1993 (5-14)	This is a curricular scheme for primary schools and the first two years of secondary education which is now being implemented, without legislation, by all Education Authorities. It specifies minimum time allocations for each area of the curriculum. These include: language 15%; mathematics 15%; environmental studies 25%; expressive arts 15%; and religious and moral education 10%. Intended to be fully implemented by 1999.
Circular 6/93 Devolved School Management Guidelines for Schemes	Invited education authorities to prepare schemes which would devolve substantial financial (at least 80% of revenue budgets) and management responsibilities to all primary, secondary and special schools. To be implemented by April 1996 in all primary and secondary schools and April 1997 for special schools (extensions to 1998 granted to all small schools).
The Parents' Charter in Scotland 1995	Promised amongst other things that: 'by the start of the 1995-96 school year all schools will have to produce a school development plan setting out their educational plans and targets' (p14) which provide a framework for managing change for the benefit of pupils.
School Development Plans in Scotland 1994, SOED	Suggests that school development plans should include a clear statement of the school's aims; an audit against key areas including management of staff, available finance and resources, parents, teachers and other school staff; and an action section which indicates targets, strategies and criteria for success.
The School Pupil Records (Scotland) Regulation 1990	Places responsibility for maintaining an attendance registrar for all pupils on to headteacher. Requires Education Authorities to keep records for children attending schools, including progress, and particular records of those with special educational needs.

Education
(Scotland) Act 1996

Reforms include, *inter alia*: extension of grants for pre-school provision; revises procedures for School Boards (specifically, procedures for election of School Board members; allows boards to co-opt up to two parent members if a by-election has failed to elect a candidate; and requires members to declare any conflict of interests); limits access to self-governing status for schools threatened with closure by their Education Authority; and requires authorities to consider safety issues when deciding on transport arrangements.

Appendix B: Summary of issues from previous research

In this section, we present a summary of the issues which emerge from a review of previously published literature. These are presented under two headings: firstly, research on small schools, and secondly, findings related to the management of change.

Small school management

Much of the existing UK literature on the management of small schools has focused on English rather than Scottish schools. It also reflects concerns about possible school closure (see for example, Galton, 1993; Bell and Sigsworth, 1987; Comber *et al*, 1981). This ongoing debate is further complicated as the dominant economic paradigm appears to have shifted during the 1980s from welfare to market economics accompanied by a 'new' managerial discourse. Terms which have very specific meanings in management and economics, for example 'cost-effectiveness', 'performance indicators' and 'bench marking', are used in far less precise and often interchangeable ways by many educationalists. Additionally, Thomas (1990) suggested that phrases such as 'better use of existing resources', 'efficiency' and 'value for money' carry implications which make them of little value, even hostile to the endeavours of those who work to change educational practice. They resonate with market economics and management-speak.

The available evidence on the costs and benefits of small schools is inconclusive (see for example Bell and Sigsworth, 1987; Bell, 1988; Comber *et al*, 1981 and Coopers and Lybrand, 1996). In general, rural Education Authorities tend to have higher unit costs per pupil than urban ones, but this is not necessarily an argument for closure on economic grounds as the recurring costs of transport, boarding and resultant loss to the community are difficult to cost over the long term. There may very well be a threshold figure, viz. the number of pupils and teachers per school, below which costs rapidly escalate. For example, Galton (1993) argues that 'schools with rolls of less than seventy pupils showed disproportions in costs per pupil with sharply escalating additional costs in schools with fewer than twenty-five pupils' (p.13).

In Scotland, it is difficult to envisage an alternative model of schooling other than one predicated on the continuing existence of small schools in some of the more remote communities. However, this does not preclude the development of innovative management structures. Although the macro-economic issues are beyond the remit of the current study, it is imperative that effective management strategies should be identified and disseminated. However, available resources cannot be ignored as they clearly impact on support for, and in-service training

of, existing small school Headteachers – thus affecting their managerial activities.

It is probably fair to assume that many Headteachers in small schools, if asked to conceptualise their approach to managing schools, would articulate a view based upon 'a public service ethos'. But this does not imply rejection of site level management schemes, *per se*, about which some Headteachers may have ambivalent feelings. The published literature (Webb and Vulliamy, 1996) indicates a possible paradox: while Headteachers admit that schemes of devolved management have increased their administrative workloads, they largely welcome the freedom to make financial decisions. Wilson *et al* (1995) in a study of Devolved School Management (DSM) identified two ways in which Headship was conceptualised: one Headteacher elaborated a model based upon being the 'careful housewife', who required the support of her School Board to manage the school budget. The other, a Headteacher of a 15 pupil school, felt that the size of his budget presented him with no particular challenges and could be managed without intruding on his teaching time. Most research on the development of management skills identifies the importance of previous experiences. Significantly, one of the above had worked in the private sector before entering teaching and utilised new technology extensively to deliver a differentiated curriculum.

However, some have argued that concepts developed in private sector establishments may be inappropriate models for small schools to emulate. Wilson and McCullagh (1993), in a study of adult basic education, found little evidence that educational managers were familiar with the budgeting procedures necessary for the operation of effective devolved management. Transference of knowledge and skills, appropriateness of training, and adequate support are clearly issues and ones which our respondents raise (see Sections 5 and 6). Way (1989) goes further and rejects models of management based upon large organisations. She formulates a unique model for small schools based upon *teaching Headteachers viz.* those who teach and manage by developing an intimate style in close collaboration with their colleagues. We will see in later sections how this links with notions of the Headteacher as 'instructional leader'. Fullan and Hargreaves, (1992) and Webb and Vulliamy (1995), talking of school management in general terms, identify a possible deskilling of Headteachers as they manage the implementation of a new curriculum which they have never taught. Significantly, a continuing presence in the classroom may actually protect small school Headteachers from this, and, in consequence, their support needs may be quite different from those of their colleagues in larger schools. Previous

Scottish research (Harlen and Malcolm, 1993) suggests that, for some Headteachers, curriculum leadership is easier in small schools precisely because teaching Heads actually teach and really do understand the problems of managing change at classroom level. Therefore, managing change in these circumstances may be a 'trade off' of contextually-based advantages and disadvantages.

Reviews of the effects of devolved school management on small schools are mixed. Some (McGrogan, 1995) argue that Local Management of Schools (LMS), as it is known outwith Scotland, has, on the whole, been beneficial for small schools. Within a Northern Irish context, where over one third of schools have fewer than 100 pupils, she suggests that Headteachers have been able to use their budgets to employ full-time or part-time teachers to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are delivered effectively. Others have increased the number of hours for secretarial help. A major study in England and Wales (Maychell, 1994) points that under LMS, there are 'winners and losers', but this may be related to the state of schools when they entered the scheme rather than the effects of managing the scheme of delegation, *per se*. We shall see from the evidence of this research, that not all schools in Scotland have implemented DSM. As the timescale for its implementation in small schools has been extended to 1998, some of our respondents have no direct experience of operating devolved management. This remains a part of their managerial role to be developed.

Managing change

How managers develop their styles during period of change has been explored in the management literature since the 1950s. Earlier work by Lewin (1951) highlights the significance of developing a vision. This is echoed in descriptions of scenario planning which emphasise not so much the end product but the process by which alternative views of the future are developed, shared and 'owned' by all staff. In an attempt to simplify the process, Lewin represents what is in essence a continuous process as a linear model. Using this model to evaluate Devolved School Management, Wilson *et al* (1995) concluded that Headteachers appeared to be at three different stages in the implementation process. These included: following procedures; linking procedures to strategy; and developing an overarching vision for the school. Few schools had developed a vision for the future, nor was resistance directly addressed.

Seminal work at Harvard Business School (Lawrence, 1969; Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979) suggests that the difficulties inherent in managing change are not technical but human. As Lawrence (*op. cit.*) points out: 'the key to the

problem is to understand the true nature of resistance [to change].’ Those managing change, in our case headteachers, need to be aware of the four most common reasons why people resist change: ‘a desire not to lose something of value, a misunderstanding of the change and its implications, a belief that the change does not make sense for the organisation and low tolerance to change’ (Kotter and Schlesinger, *op cit.*) Perhaps reassuringly for Scottish policy makers, we shall see in Section 5 that there is little or no fundamental resistance from Headteachers in small schools to the four main innovations – merely reservations about timescales, availability of certain resources, and management approaches.

Developing an appropriate management style, with few staff and no management team, was likely to be an issue of concern to our respondents. Kelly (1995a, 1995b, 1996) argues that extensive change has led school managers to adopt a more activist learning style which relies upon action and experience. Increasing pressure to act decisively, quickly and in concert has changed traditional expectations which relied on more thoughtful, reflective styles. He attributes this trend to:

...a reaction to the major legislative, societal and cultural changes which have characterised the educational environment in the last 3-5 years, in particular, in the areas of curriculum change, budgetary change, changes in the time scale and degree of accountability, monitoring and evaluation, and in general in the growing complexity of the management task facing leaders and managers in schools. (Kelly, 1995)

Interestingly Leithwood *et al* (1995) who researched the adaptation of the Learning Organisation in schools reported that the component most strongly connected with organisational learning was the allocation of resources for professional development days or the provision of support personnel. Both of these were highlighted by our respondents, yet both may be more difficult to access for schools in more remote locations. In the Northern Irish context, Mifsud *et al* (1994) highlight the value of ‘event driven management logs’ to headteachers in enabling them to develop proactive and reflective approaches to management. Proactive management was seen as enabling Principals to deal more effectively with the demands of both LMS and curricular reform. The issue of management style is discussed in Section 5.

Appendix C: Methodology

Time Scale	Method	Sample	Rationale
Throughout	literature review	review of relevant literature on managing change, education initiatives and small schools	to familiarise researchers with current issues and related research findings
March / April 1996	semi-structured interviews and 6 school visits	2 schools in 3 mainland Education Authorities	to sensitise the research team to the main issues identified by headteachers, teachers and School Board members
December, 1996	postal survey	National survey of small schools; sample included: 576 schools below 60 pupils 328 schools 60–120 pupils original sample frame of 904 schools was by 1996 reduced, mainly through school mergers and closure, to 863.	to give an overview of the perceptions of headteachers on managing change and the strategies they adopted; to compare the effects of variables such as size and locality on developing style
January to May 1997	case studies using semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis	18 case sites; 2 in each of: Group 1 authorities: Highland, Western Isles, Moray, Aberdeenshire, Argyll & Bute; Perth & Kinross Group 2 authorities: West Lothian, Stirling and Fife	to explore further issues identified in survey data, such as: change management; strategies and activities developed; and bio-data on headteachers
October, 1997	data feedback	feedback of emerging issues to larger sample of headteachers (2 in all Education Authorities with small schools (30))	validation of findings

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Effective Management Of Change In Small Primary Schools

A questionnaire for primary school headteachers

For Office
Use only

A. About your school

[see Table 3.1]

1. What is the current roll of your school? _____ pupils 5-7

2. Is the roll?

Tick one box

increasing (1) 8

decreasing (2)

fairly stable (3)

3. How many teachers (including yourself) are there in the school? [see Table 3.2] 9-10

4. How would you describe your school's catchment area?

Tick one box

rural (1) 11

town (2)

city (3)

mixed (4)

island (5)

5. In which Education Authority is your school sited? _____ [see Table 3.3] 12-13

6. Do any of the following factors pertain to your school?

Tick as many as apply

geographical isolation 14

poor/inadequate accommodation 15

inadequate facilities for games/PE 16

connected to E-mail network 17

B. Headship in practice

7. Looking back over the past 5 years would you describe it as a period of rapid?

Tick as many as apply

curricular change 18

management change 19

societal change 20

8. Have these changes placed particular pressure on small schools?

yes	652 (1)
no	14 (2)
varies/don't know	29 (3)

21

9. Which of the following initiatives have you implemented within your school?

(Please circle)

1 = fully 2 = partly 3 = not implemented yet

• 5-14	1 67	2 605	3 0
• School Development Planning (SDP)	1 597	2 91	3 8
• Staff Development/Appraisal (SDA)	1 167	2 304	3 212
• Devolved School Management (DSM)	1 332	2 124	3 237

22

23

24

25

10. Which of the following methods/activities have you used to implement the 4 initiatives?

(Please circle)

	5-14	SDP	SDA	DSM
a. Formal consultation with staff	631	583	373	261
b. Informal consultation with staff	554	525	383	350
c. Formal consultation with parents	393	230	30	163
d. Informal discussions with parents	505	293	70	202
e. Target setting	521	542	264	126
f. Delegation of specific tasks	434	315	158	152
g. Utilised advice from EDS/EAs	611	593	384	348
h. Joined development groups outwith school	521	242	144	107
i. Reading/analysis of documentation	622	543	402	367
j. Personal development activity (eg study, Teacher Placement)	389	234	212	111
k. Informal discussion with other headteachers	663	570	404	426
l. Preparation of written strategy	552	544	226	122
m. Working closely with school clerical staff	264	261	84	425
n. Informal discussion with friends/acquaintances	508	365	274	279
o. Advice from School Board	141	195	21	183
p. Advice from HMIs	248	197	71	38
q. Other (please specify): 45				

26-29

30-33

34-37

38-41

42-45

46-49

50-53

54-57

58-61

62-65

66-69

70-73

74-77

78-81

82-85

86-89

90

[see Table 5.1 and 5.2]

End
Card 1

11. Which of the following support mechanisms:	Tick as many as apply		Card 2
	Have you utilised?	Do you require?	
E-mail	260	161	1-2
Video conferencing	53	98	3-4
Clustering at the level of informal exchanges with nearby schools	643	47	5-6
Clustering at the level of joint policies and work schemes	434	114	7-8
Clustering at the level of joint teaching and full resource sharing	178	112	9-10
Small schools network (staff)	331	114	11-12
Shared PAT sessions with nearby schools	516	73	13-14
Shared In Service days with nearby schools	651	54	15-16
Advice from EDS/EAs	619	65	17-18
Additional clerical support	207	266	19-20
Discussions with parents	584	45	21-22
Discussions with school board	472	24	23-24
Support from the community	488	54	25-26
Other (please specify): 23			27

C. Headship in a small school

We are interested in your opinions about the experience of headship in a small school.

12. Below is a list of statements drawn from individual interviews with headteachers. Which of them reflects your own experience as head of a small school?

	Tick as many as apply	
Headship is like sitting on a lonely crag	138	
I don't see myself as a manager, I see myself as head of a team	491	28
Small school heads never go on to senior positions in education	46	29
I felt more confident after an HM inspection	129	30
Having to teach my own children was a difficult time	76	31
I want to offer a 'good Scottish education'	447	32
I want to create a safe and happy environment in this school	691	33
I get to the paperwork when and if I can	308	34
Parents support me in my aims here	592	35
The children are more confident with the computer than I am	188	36
Geographical isolation is not really a problem	332	37
The threat of closure is never very far from our minds	163	38
It is difficult to leave the classroom	370	39
I don't have a team, I am the team	96	40
Management training needs adapting for small school headteachers	473	41
The kids keep me going	272	42
I feel more stressed than I used to	470	43
		44

13. Which of the following statements best describes your attitude towards recent changes?

Tick one box

- change is long overdue; many of the new initiatives simply formalise good practice 58 (1)
- each change has to be taken on its merits and adapted according to need 182 (2)
- the problem lies in the pace of change; there just aren't enough hours in the day 271 (3)
- it's a case of change for the sake of change; we've had too much thrown at us already 15 (4)

D. About you

14. Are you Male 135 (1)
Female 571 (2)

15. Please indicate your age:
- under 35 28 (1)
- 35-50 483 (2)
- over 50 195 (3)

16. Do you currently live within your school's catchment area? yes 208 (1)
no 498 (2)

17. As a child, did you attend a small primary school?
- yes 221 (1)
- no 482 (2)

18. Were you originally from a rural area?
- yes 288 (1)
- no 412 (2)

19. Were you educated in a:

Tick as many as apply

- Scottish University 151
- Scottish College of Education 604
- Other 117 *Please specify* _____

45

46

47

48

49

50

51

52

53

54

20. What educational qualifications do you possess?

Tick as many as apply

College DipEd

546

55

BEd

65

56

BA, BSc, MA

161

57

MEd

24

58

PGCE

75

59

Other

173

60

Please specify _____

61

E. Your route to headship

[see Figure 4a]

62-63

21. How long have you been headteacher in this school? years

22. Have you previous experience of teaching in a small school?

64

yes

430 (1)

no

270 (2)

23. Is this your first headship?

65

yes

572 (1)

no

126 (2)

66

If no, please specify previous experience _____

130

24. Have you received any management training for headship?

67

yes

547 (1)

no

145 (2)

Comment: Could you briefly describe the nature of the training or the reasons why none has been received _____

68

25. From which of the following sources did you receive encouragement to apply for your current post?

Tick as many as apply

self

493

69

friends

365

70

colleagues

400

71

the former headteacher

130

72

the headteacher in my previous school

344

73

EA advisers/other members of the directorate

231

74

other

96

75

Please specify _____

SCU 2360016

26. Which of the following best describes your career plans for the future?

Tick one box

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| remain in current post | <input type="text" value="281"/> (1) |
| apply for headship of a larger school | <input type="text" value="136"/> (2) |
| apply for headship of another small school | <input type="text" value="18"/> (3) |
| seek other employment in education | <input type="text" value="19"/> (4) |
| seek employment outwith education | <input type="text" value="4"/> (5) |
| seek early retirement | <input type="text" value="52"/> (6) |
| no clear plans at the moment | <input type="text" value="108"/> (7) |
| other | <input type="text" value="21"/> (8) |

If other, please specify _____

F. Finally

27. If you would like to comment on or describe any strategies for managing change effectively that you have developed, please use this space:

End
Card 2

Thank you for the time and trouble you have taken to respond to this questionnaire - your help is very much appreciated. Please return it to SCRE in the envelope provided, if possible, by **Friday 27 September 1996.**

Appendix E: 'Case Study' School Headteacher Profiles

School 1 Location Rural Authority Authority 'L' (Northern) No. of Staff HT (female) + 2 No. of pupils 58 Experience Acting HT in a larger rural school Management training Nothing specific Length of time in post Less than 1 year Career plans None at present: a lot to do in current job Rural background Yes Support for management One day free from teaching per week (but tends to end up teaching). Management style Teaching comes before other responsibilities.		School 2 Location Rural Authority Authority 'L' (Northern) No. of Staff HT (female) + 1 No. of pupils 28 Experience Senior Teacher then AHT in another school before appointment Management training Diploma in Primary School Management plus a Management Diploma (not specific to education). Length of time in post Not mentioned. Career plans Has applied for two posts as a non-teaching HT in larger schools. Support for management 2.75 hours a week free from teaching, but no clerical support. Management style A team approach is essential.	
School 3 Location Rural Authority Authority 'G' (Northern) No. of Staff HT (Female) + 3 No. of pupils 57 Experience Acting HT in another small rural school Management training Management course at university Length of time in post 9 years Career plans None Support for management One day free from teaching per week. 22 hours clerical support (was 13 before introduction of DSM) Management style Leading by example is key in a small school.		School 4 Location Rural, near city. Authority Authority 'G' (Northern) No. of Staff HT (female) + 5 No. of pupils 118 Experience HT in another school for 8 years before taking up current post. Management training Management Diploma and also OU 'Managing Schools' diploma course. Length of time in post 16 years Career plans Expects to stay in the school until retirement. Support for management Teaching time is from 9.45 to lunch-time (she takes children requiring learning support). Rest of the time is for management. Secretary works from 9 to 1. Has refused additional help for DSM. Management style Stresses the importance of a good working relationship.	

School 5	School 6
Location	Rural (but 3 miles from large town)
Authority	Authority 'E' (Central)
No. of Staff	HT (female) + 1
No. of pupils	18
Experience	Acting HT for two years in same school before being confirmed in post. No previous management experience.
Management training	No headship training at the time she was acting HT. Learnt most of what she knows 'on the job'. Has since attended two management training courses and training in appraisal.
Length of time in post	9 years
Career plans	Would like to move on to non-teaching headship, in order to avoid 'stagnation', and because she is concerned about how she will cope with everything when she becomes sole teacher.
Support for management	Has one afternoon free per week for management. An auxiliary is employed (but hours not mentioned).
Management style	Important to 'discuss everything' with the staff, including peripatetic and support staff.

School 7	School 8
Location	Authority 'F' (Northern)
Authority	HT (female)
No. of Staff	11
No. of pupils	Appointed almost immediately after completing probation in another school. She had grown up in the village and everyone knew her.
Experience	No headship training at the time of appointment or subsequently.
Management training	24 years
Length of time in post	No intention of leaving. 'I would just hate to leave the children.'
Career plans	Remote, rural
Location	Seemed to have neither time free from teaching nor support staff.
Support for management	Teaching is the priority.
Management style	

School 9

Location Rural, near small town.

Authority Authority 'M' (Northern)

No. of Staff HT (male) + 4

No. of pupils 80

Experience No management experience before becoming HT. Previous headteacher left 'a jolter with advice in it of all kinds, such as how to programme the boiler and how to fill in various forms, but that was it.'

Management training None before taking up post or subsequently

Length of time in post 18 years

Career plans Not looking to move: he liked the area and the feeling of being close to the community

Support for management

Management style 'It's a team effort, with myself as leader/ co-ordinator.'

School 11

Location Rural, in an isolated position serving three nearby villages.

Authority Authority 'C' (Northern)

No. of Staff HT (female) + 1

No. of pupils 18

Experience Acting HT twice in the same school before being appointed as HT. No previous management experience within education (but also jointly runs a farm).

Management training No headship training at the time of appointment, but has since completed SOEID Principles of Management.

Length of time in post 7 years

Career plans Would like to move to a larger school, but not likely to do so because of other commitments.

Support for management Has one afternoon free per week for management, but uses this to take children swimming. Has clerical support every morning for 2.5 hours, and another auxiliary specifically for DSM, for 7.5 hours a week.

Management style Involves all staff in decision-making

School 10

Location Rural, 5 miles from small town.

Authority Authority 'M' (Northern)

No. of Staff HT (female) + 1

No. of pupils 21

Experience Acting HT in larger school in same area, prior to appointment.

Management training Training provided by Authority included SOEID course on 'Monitoring School Effectiveness.'

Length of time in post 5 years

Career plans Not discussed

Support for management Has one afternoon free per week for management but uses this for team teaching. Has secretary, but hours not mentioned.

Management style Sees herself as leading by example.

School 12

Location Rural

Authority Authority 'C' (Northern)

No. of Staff HT (female) + 3.6

No. of pupils 77

Experience Was senior teacher in another school. Encouraged to apply for headships by authority.

Management training None before she took up post. Took two modules at Strathclyde Staff College.

Length of time in post 5 years

Career plans In the past had applied for headship of larger school, now wants to remain a teaching head.

Support for management One day free per week for management. Clerical support not discussed.

Management style Leading the team, from the front. Consultation with the staff is important, but decisions must be taken at the end of this.

School 13

Location Remote, island
 Authority Authority 'I' (Island)
 No. of Staff HT (female) + 2
 No. of pupils 59
 Experience Was an adviser before appointment as AHT in this school. Currently acting HT.
 Management training No training before taking up post. Has since attended Quality Assurance courses for HTs, and other HMI-led courses. An Authority-run workshop for recently appointed HTs was more effective.
 Length of time in post 2 years
 Career plans Comes from the island and does not want to leave.
 Support for management Has 15 hours clerical support per week ('not enough').
 Management style A team approach: 'What I want most of all is a team of teachers working with me who are able to trust me, and who are on a par with me. We have been together now for 5-7 years.'

School 15 (Infants School)

Location Town
 Authority Authority 'N' (Central)
 No. of Staff HT (female) + 1 + several part-time teachers (= 0.65 FTE)
 No. of pupils 42 + 10 part-time nursery pupils
 Experience First HT post
 Management training Advanced diploma at university, after taking up post. Also several SOEID modules, which she felt to be helpful.
 Length of time in post 10 years
 Career plans Would be interested in moving on to a larger school as a non-teaching HT or else to an Authority Education Department, with a research focus.
 Support for management 2 days per week are free for management. Secretary works 10 hours per week, and an auxiliary provides 10 hours support for DSM, per week.
 Management style Team approach with HT as team leader.

101

School 14

Location Island school, rural location
 Authority Authority 'I' (Island)
 No. of Staff HT (female) + 1
 No. of pupils 21
 Experience Previously AHT in charge of Early Education in a large city school.
 Management training Asked for HT training on taking up post but has only been provided now: on general issues such as money management, administration etc.
 Length of time in post 2 years
 Career plans No intentions at present of moving; likes the school.
 Support for management Two hours per week free for management. Five hours clerical/auxiliary support.
 Management style Because of a large number of changes just before she took up post, there was a need to re-establish the identity of the school. Sees herself as 'curriculum leader': 'I wouldn't expect my staff to do anything I am not prepared to do myself.'

School 16

Location Town
 Authority Authority 'N' (Central)
 No. of Staff HT (female) + 4
 No. of pupils 75
 Experience Worked as development officer for the Authority. Then became AHT in another school, and Acting DHT in current school, before being appointed HT.
 Management training Has taken management and development courses for HTs and DHTs, including 'Recruitment and Selection' and 'Monitoring School Effectiveness'.
 Length of time in post 3 years
 Career plans Not discussed
 Support for management Two days free per week for management. Has a secretary.
 Management style Collaborative, consultative style. Team approach is facilitated by small school environment.

102

School 17

Location	Rural
Authority	Authority 'A' (Northern)
No. of Staff	HT (male) + 4
No. of pupils	81
Experience	AHT in another school, then became acting HT in current school before being confirmed in post.
Management training	None other than 'mentoring' by HT in school where he was AHT.
Length of time in post	8 years
Career plans	Not planning to move in the near future. Is happy in the school. Has just been inspected - very stressful. Does not want to move and find himself involved in another inspection almost immediately.
Support for management	One person works as school secretary, dinner auxiliary and playground supervisor - and is therefore almost full-time.
Management style	Consultative management style: '[I'm] trying to consult as much as I can with the staff, listening to their ideas - and very often their ideas are better than my own ... You can make a decision, but at least they know where you're coming from.'

103

School 18

Location	Rural
Authority	Authority 'A' (Northern)
No. of Staff	HT (female) + 1
No. of pupils	27
Experience	Class teacher in another small rural school before taking up this post.
Management training	None at the time of appointment. Has since received training in specific initiatives, such as DSM.
Length of time in post	10 years
Career plans	Has recently been involved in a successful inspection and is now thinking of moving to a bigger school. 'I need a challenge again to do something in another school.'
Support for management	Relief teacher works 80 days per year. Has a secretary, but hours not mentioned.
Management style	Team work. 'Everybody is involved as far as possible, so they feel part of the school. Anything new that we do, anything we work at, I always ask their opinion. We'll sit down together and share ideas, and we come to an agreement together.'

104

Appendix F: Supplementary Tables

Supplementary Tables for Chapter 5

The tables below compare management activities and attitudes to management of small schools reported by 'advanced' and 'early stages' implementers (97 and 95 headteachers respectively). 'Advanced' and 'early stages' headteachers were compared in relation to management activities (Table V:1) and to attitudes to management of small schools (Table V:2).

Table V:1 Proportional increases in uses of management activities between 'advanced' implementers and 'early stages' implementers

Clearly, one would expect 'advanced' Headteachers to have used a wider range of strategies simply because they are more likely to have implemented each initiative than those in the early stages. What is of interest is not percentages of headteachers from each group but the proportional increase in use of strategies by the 'advanced' group, in relation to each initiative. These data are shown in Table V:1 below.

Table V:1 Proportional increases in uses of management activities between 'advanced' implementers and 'early stages' implementers

	5-14			SDP			DSM			SDA		
	Early	Advanced	Proportional increase	Early	Advanced	Proportional increase	Early	Advanced	Proportional increase	Early	Advanced	Proportional increase
Informal discussions with HTs	97	96	0.99	81	84	1.04	33	87	2.64	40	70	1.71
Advice from EDS/EAs	83	88	1.06	78	89	1.14	16	75	4.69	31	74	2.39
Formal consultation with staff	79	92	1.16	78	88	1.13	6	67	11.17	22	88	4.00
Documentation	83	93	1.12	71	80	1.13	22	77	3.50	32	73	2.28
Informal discussion with staff	81	80	0.99	77	80	1.04	17	74	4.35	33	72	2.18
Written strategies	77	75	0.97	78	79	1.01	3	43	14.33	16	51	3.19
Target setting	68	78	1.15	68	81	1.19	4	38	9.50	17	71	4.18
Informal discussions with friends	75	68	0.90	52	44	0.85	23	56	2.43	28	37	1.32
Informal discussions with parents	73	74	1.01	43	30	0.70	10	41	4.1	4	13	3.25
Clerical support	37	43	1.16	36	40	1.11	21	94	4.48	7	16	2.29
Delegation	52	62	1.19	40	42	1.05	2	38	19.00	16	39	2.44
Development groups	70	72	1.03	33	32	0.97	5	23	4.60	19	22	1.16
Personal development	56	56	1.00	35	37	1.06	5	31	6.20	13	49	3.77
Formal consultation with parents	40	59	1.48	24	31	1.29	6	45	7.50	2	8	4.00
HMI	25	43	1.72	21	36	1.24	1	10	10.00	4	18	4.50
School Boards	18	21	1.17	22	38	1.73	12	44	3.67	2	5	2.50

Table V:2 Differences in attitude to management of small schools between 'advanced' and 'early stage' implementers

Table V:2 shows that 'advanced' implementers were more likely to agree with the statements:



- I don't see myself as a manager. I see myself as head of a team.
- and
- I feel more confident after an HM inspection.

'Early stages' implementers were more likely to agree with the statements:

- Headship is like sitting on a lonely crag.
- The children are more confident with the computer than I am.
- Geographical isolation is not really a problem.
- It is difficult to leave the classroom.
- I don't have a team, I am the team.
- The kids keep me going.

Table V:2 Differences in attitude to management of small schools between 'advanced' and 'early stage' implementers

	Early stages n=95	Advanced n=97
lonely crag	22	10
head of team not manager	60	76
do not advance	5	5
more confident after inspection	12	21
teaching own kids hard	11	10
want good Scottish education	68	66
happy safe environment	98	99
paperwork if I can	40	37
parents support aims	85	87
kids better with computer	35	27
isolation not a problem	55	46
threat of closure	20	21
classroom hard to leave	54	42
I am the team	13	7
management training needs adapting	62	58
kids keep me going	42	37
more stressed now	66	62

Differences of 5% or over are shaded , where attitude is more frequently expressed by 'advanced' implementer and  where it is more frequently expressed by 'early stage' implementer.

The evidence from Tables V:1 and V:2 seems to indicate that:

- 1) advanced implementers are more likely to
 - use delegation and target setting
 - have a preference for formal consultation with staff and parents
 - be more willing to seek advice from HMI and School Boards
 - feel confident
 - adopt the 'leadership within the team' model (discussed in Chapter 6)
- 2) 'early stages' implementers appear to classroom focused and possibly to feel that their first priority is the children.

Supplementary Tables for Chapter 6

The tables below show the differences in the use of management activities by various groups of Headteachers:

- Table VI:1 shows the differences between first time Headteachers and those with previous management experience
- Table VI:2 shows the difference between Headteachers who have been in post for up to 5 years and those who have been in post for 5 years or more
- Table VI:3 shows the differences between Headteachers who have had management experience and those who have not
- Table VI:4 shows the differences between Headteachers who intend to stay on in their current posts and those who are seeking promotion

In each case, the tables show only the activities where there are substantial differences (5% or above) between the two groups. Where the figures are the same or very close, these have not been included, for ease of reading. There are consistent differences between the two groups studied in each case.

Table VI:1 Differences in activities used to implement new initiatives among first time Headteachers and those with previous experience

Table VI:1 shows that 'first time' Headteachers are more likely to use a wider range of management activities than 'experienced' Headteachers: the average difference between the two groups (comparing all activities listed, not just those where there are substantial differences) is 2%.

Table VI:1 Differences in activities used to implement new initiatives among first time Headteachers and those with previous experience

Management strategy	5-14		SDP		SDA		DSM		Over-all (%)
	First Time (%)	Experienced (%)	First Time (%)	Experienced (%)	First Time (%)	Experienced (%)	First Time (%)	Experienced (%)	
Informal discussions with other HTs			(82)	75	(58)	52			73
Advice from EDS/ EAs	(88)	83							68
Documentation			(78)	72	(58)	52	(53)	48	68
Target setting					(36)	44			51
Written strategies	(80)	70							51
Informal discussion with parents			(43)	35	(11)	6			38
Delegation							(23)	15	37
Personal development			(34)	29					33
Formal consultation with parents			(35)	28					29
School Board							(27)	20	19

[Note: figures show areas where substantial differences were found. Figures which were similar for both groups have been omitted for the sake of clarity.]

Table VI:2 Differences in activities used to implement new initiatives among those who have been in their current post for up to 5 years, and those who have been in post for 6 years or more

Table VI:2 shows that Headteachers who have been in post for up to 5 years are more likely to use a wider range of management activities than those who have been in post for 5 years or more. However, the effect is less noticeable than between 'first time' and 'experienced' headteachers: the average difference over all activities is 0.6%.

Table VI:2 Differences in activities used to implement new initiatives among those who have been in their current post for up to 5 years, and those who have been in post for 6 years or more

Management strategy	5-14		SDP		SDA		DSM		Over-all (%)
	up to 5 years (%)	over 5 years (%)	up to 5 years (%)	over 5 years (%)	up to 5 years (%)	over 5 years (%)	up to 5 years (%)	over 5 years (%)	
Informal discussions with other HTs							(65)	57	73
Advice from EDS/ EAs					(51)	58	(52)	47	68
Documentation	(91)	86					(57)	49	68
Formal consultation with staff					(48)	57	(40)	35	65
Informal discussion with staff							(53)	48	64
Target setting	(77)	71	(80)	74					51
Written strategies					(27)	36			51
Delegation			(48)	43					37
Clerical support							(66)	56	37
Formal consultation with parents			(37)	29					29
Advice from HMI	(38)	33							20
School Board			(33)	23					19

[Note: figures show areas where substantial differences were found. Figures which were similar for both groups have been omitted for the sake of clarity.]

Table VI:3 Differences in activities used to implement new initiatives among those who have and those who have not received management training

Table VI:3 shows that headteachers who have had management experience are more likely to use a wider range of management activities than those who have not: the average difference overall activities is 6%.

Table VI:3 Differences in activities used to implement new initiatives among those who have and those who have not received management training

Management strategy	5-14		SDP		SDA		DSM		Over-all
	Trained (%)	Not trained (%)	Trained (%)	Not trained (%)	Trained (%)	Not trained (%)	Trained (%)	Not trained (%)	
Informal discussions with other HTs					59	52	(63)	52	73
Advice from EDS/ EAs	(88)	80	(86)	79	58	41	(51)	43	68
Documentation	(89)	84	(80)	63	61	41	(54)	41	68
Formal consultation with staff	(91)	85	(84)	77	57	39	(39)	27	65
Informal discussion with staff					56	46	(52)	41	64
Target setting	(75)	68	(79)	68	41	26	(20)	10	51
Written strategies	(80)	72	(79)	68	35	21	(19)	10	51
Informal discussions with friends			(50)	58					50
Delegation					24	17	(23)	15	37
Clerical support							(63)	48	37
Development groups	(76)	64					(17)	8	36
Personal development					32	22	(17)	10	33
Formal consultation with parents			(34)	27					29
School Board			(29)	23			(27)	22	19

[Note: figures show areas where substantial differences were found. Figures which were similar for both groups have been omitted for the sake of clarity.]

Table VI:4 Differences in activities used to implement new initiatives among those who intending to stay in post and those intending to move on

Table VI:4 shows that headteachers seeking promotion are more likely to use a wider range of management activities than those intending to remain in their current posts: the average difference over all activities is 7%.

Table VI:4 Differences in activities used to implement new initiatives among those who intending to stay in post and those intending to move on

Management strategy	5-14		SDP		SDA		DSM		Overall (%)
	Remain/ retire	Move on	Remain/ retire	Move on	Remain/ retire	Move on	Remain/ retire	Move on	
	n=333	n=177	n=333	n=177	n=333	n=177	n=333	n=177	
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	
Informal discussions with other HTs			(78)	84	(52)	66	(56)	65	73
Advice from EDS/ EAs			(82)	87	(51)	58	(47)	53	68
Documentation	(86)	93	(74)	82	(52)	66	(47)	60	68
Formal consultation with staff	(86)	93	(80)	85	(44)	63	(34)	44	65
Informal discussion with staff			(72)	80	(52)	57	(45)	59	64
Target setting	(72)	79	(73)	86	(35)	46	(15)	23	51
Written strategies			(75)	80			(14)	19	51
Informal discussions with friends	(70)	75	(47)	58	(33)	48	(33)	47	50
Informal discussions with parents			(42)	48			(25)	33	38
Delegation	(59)	67	(44)	51	(20)	28	(17)	28	37
Clerical support	(36)	41					(57)	65	37
Development groups	(69)	79			(17)	26	(12)	20	36
Personal development			(29)	39	(23)	41	(13)	23	33
Formal consultation with parents	(50)	66	(29)	42	(2)	7	(21)	29	29
School Board			(27)	33			(22)	30	19

[Note: figures show areas where substantial differences were found. Figures which were similar for both groups have been omitted for the sake of clarity.]

Appendix G: Validation questionnaire and summary of responses



Managing Change: lessons from Scottish small schools

Below, we ask for your opinions on issues emerging from our research. At this stage these are tentative and confidential. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements, regardless of whether you are yet fully to implement particular initiatives. We would also like to know whether you feel that your school operates in the way described. Please also add any comments you wish to make.

Management style Do you agree that: a teaching Headteacher's credibility as a leader is based on the example s/he sets in the classroom for other staff?	Agree	Disagree	Agree + It is like this in my school	Comments
	16	6	28	36
in a small school, it is essential for the Head and staff to discuss and agree strategies for implementing change together?	11	0	42	20
a Headteacher in a small school works closely with the local community to implement change?	15	10	22	27
the involvement of the local community in the management of the school is increasing?	10	29	12	22
the language used to describe the management of larger schools is an inappropriate way of describing how Headteachers manage change in small schools?	28	14	5	27
ultimate responsibility for decision-making must rest with the Headteacher?	24	1	27	20
headteachers of small schools have a very practical approach to management of change based upon trial and error?	16	20	14	29
model their practice on headteachers whom they have seen in the past?	15	28	6	23
have opportunities to manage change in accordance with their own beliefs and values?	28	11	12	24
headteachers of small schools believe that there are 'no right answers' to managing change?	24	15	11	26

Strategies for implementing change*Do you agree that:*

	Agree	Disagree	Agree + It is like this in my school	Comments
new initiatives are most effectively introduced by working collaboratively with other staff	19	0	34	17
delegation is an essential skill for the headteacher of a small school?	22	7	23	32
the pace of change is not necessarily slower in small schools?	33	2	18	24
formal clusters are a valuable form of support for the management of change in small schools?	18	9	22	22
headteachers in small schools maintain informal networks with colleagues in other areas?	22	4	25	9
Headteachers in small schools place a higher priority on their work with children than on implementing management activities?	11	14	23	33
Headteachers in small schools have developed ways of dealing with the increasing management demands placed on them?	18	10	21	28
Support and development <i>Do you agree that:</i>	Agree	Disagree	Agree + It is like this in my school	Comments
relevant induction training/ development is provided for newly appointed Heads of small schools?	10	33	3	29
management training for heads of small schools should be different from that provided for heads of larger schools?	30	20	2	26
the work of clerical staff in small schools has become significantly more demanding in the last five years?	32	1	19	20
information and communications technology (such as e-mail and video communication) is the most effective way of delivering support and training for Headteachers?	5	43	1	30
greater financial control through devolved school management will facilitate the management of small schools in the future?	27	11	10	28
the only way to learn how to manage change in small schools is to be 'thrown in at the deep end' into the job?	7	40	2	28
get good ideas from reading books on how to manage change?	20	25	5	26



Please could you tick the appropriate box to indicate whether your school currently has

1 - 60 pupils

☒ 23

61 - 120 pupils

☒ 30

Thank you for your time and attention. Your participation in this research is greatly appreciated.

Please return this form in the reply-paid envelope attached by **10 October 1997**, to:

Cathy Brown, Scottish Council for Research in Education, 15 St John Street, EDINBURGH, EH8 8JR.

You may prefer to fax the form to SCRE, on 0131-556 9454.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Cathy Brown or Joanna McPake at SCRE. The telephone number is 0131-557 2944.

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